

University of Warwick institutional repository: <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap>

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick

<http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap/77153>

This thesis is made available online and is protected by original copyright.

Please scroll down to view the document itself.

Please refer to the repository record for this item for information to help you to cite it. Our policy information is available from the repository home page.

Nietzsche's Epistemology: A Kantian Reading

by

Danyal Faramarzi

Thesis

Submitted to the University of Warwick

for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Philosophy

July 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	i
<i>Declaration</i>	ii
<i>Abstract</i>	iii
<i>Abbreviations</i>	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
PART ONE: KANT	10
1. The Transcendental Aesthetic	11
(1) <i>A Priority</i>	12
(2) Analytic vs Synthetic Distinction	16
(3) Setting the Stage for the Aesthetic	21
(4) Arguments of the Aesthetic	23
(a) The Metaphysical Exposition	24
(b) The Transcendental Exposition	28
2. Kant's Doctrine of Transcendental Idealism	32
(1) Doctrine of Transcendental Idealism	34
(2) Transcendental vs Empirical Distinction	35
(a) Transcendental vs Empirical Idealism	39
(3) Ontological Denial and the Neglected Alternative	41
(a) The Neglected Alternative	43
(b) Kant's Ontological Denial	46
(c) Objections to Kant's Ontological Denial	50
(4) One-World vs Two-World Views	54
3. The Transcendental Analytic	61
(1) Setting the Stage for the Analytic	63
(2) The Analytic Proper	64
(3) The B-Deduction	67
(4) Restriction of the Categories to Phenomena	76
(5) Phenomena vs Noumena	79

PART TWO: SCHOPENHAUER	84
4. Schopenhauer <i>Contra</i> Kant	85
(1) Criticism of Causality	86
(2) Schopenhauer's Theory of Cognition	97
5. Kant <i>Contra</i> Schopenhauer	105
(1) Causality Reconsidered	106
(2) Kant <i>contra</i> Schopenhauer on Cognition	111
(3) Schopenhauer on Empirical Reality	119
 PART THREE: EARLY NIETZSCHE	 127
6. Nietzsche and Transcendental Idealism	130
(1) Metaphysical Correspondence	131
(2) Nietzsche in Relation to Kant and Schopenhauer	133
(3) The Neglected Alternative	137
(4) The Need for the Thing-in-Itself	141
(5) Ideality of the Empirical World	144
7. Nietzsche on the Concept	149
(1) Concept Creation	150
(2) Knowledge Creation	153
(3) Reversal of Cause and Effect	157
(4) <i>Contra</i> Nietzsche	160
(a) Belief in Objectivity	161
(b) Nietzsche on Non-Conceptual Cognition	163
8. Concept Creation and Objective Validity	171
(1) Apperceptive vs Phenomenalist Approaches in Kant	173
(2) Rule of Apprehension	176
(3) The Problem of Non-Conceptual Marks	182
(4) Objective Validity	187
 PART FOUR: LATE NIETZSCHE	 191
9. Perspectivism and the Rejection of the Thing-in-Itself	193
(1) Thing-in-Itself = Non-Perspectival Object	193
(2) Perspectival Character of Objects	198
(3) Possibility of Thinking the Thing-in-Itself	203
(4) Epistemology vs Ontology	210
(a) Leiter contra Poellner	214
(5) Nietzsche's Need for the Thing-in-Itself	218
(a) Nietzsche's Receptivity Thesis	222
(6) Thing-in-itself vs Transcendental Object	225

CONCLUSION	230
BIBLIOGRAPHY	233

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would firstly like to thank my supervisors Keith Ansell-Pearson and Peter Poellner for their continued support over the past four years. I am very grateful for Keith's assistance in providing a focus for my thesis and Peter's meticulous and incisive comments on numerous draft chapters. I would also like to thank Quassim Cassam with whom I spent one year working on Kant and from whose supervision I benefitted greatly.

I also wish to extend my thanks to my girlfriend, Lina, and especially to my close friends Alex and James, whose friendships have helped me through some of the more isolating periods of the last four years.

And above all, my deepest gratitude is reserved for my family. To my brother, my father, and my mother I owe more than I could ever relay on this page. Thank you.

Danyal

DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. I hereby confirm that it is my own original work, has been composed by myself, and has not, in whole or in parts, been submitted to any journals or in any previous application for any degree.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to locate Nietzsche's thoughts on epistemology within the Kantian tradition of Transcendental Idealism. Through a critical involvement with both Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation*, the study will draw attention to the level of Nietzsche's involvement with key issues in Kantian epistemology. In doing so it will put forward a reading of Nietzsche's early 'error theory', which rejects the idea that Nietzsche endorses a metaphysical correspondence theory of truth. It will instead be argued that in the early error theory Nietzsche is critiquing the discursivity of our understanding. The study will finish with a consideration of Nietzsche's attempted rejection of the concept of the thing-in-itself through an epistemology of perspectivism. It will be argued that this rejection, much like Schopenhauer's rejection of Kant's inference to the thing-in-itself, ultimately fails and that Nietzsche's perspectivism itself presupposes the ability to refer to, and make use of, the concept of reality in itself.

ABBREVIATIONS

BGE	Beyond Good and Evil
CPR	Critique of Pure Reason
GS	The Gay Science
HH	Human, All Too Human
JL	Jäsche Logik
OGM	On the Genealogy of Morality
P	Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics
TL	On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense
WP	The Will to Power
WWR 1	The World as Will and Representation, Volume 1
WWR 2	The World as Will and Representation, Volume 2

INTRODUCTION

One of the most distinctive features of Friedrich Nietzsche's work, and one which any reader is struck by upon reading any one of his books, is the characteristically loose, elusive, and philosophically unorthodox style of his writing. As noted by Peter Poellner, we find relatively little philosophical argumentation in his books,¹ and his writings are often presented as maxims or mere assertions, usually written in a thought-provoking and highly enigmatic style. This style has had the merit of attracting a far wider readership outside of academia than perhaps any other philosopher. Unfortunately, however, it has often come at the expense of the popular – and in my opinion incorrect – notion, found both inside and outside of academic circles, that Nietzsche is not a philosopher *as such*, and that his claims are more some sort of amalgamation of *ad hoc*, *ad hominem*, psycho-sociological philosophical reflections which would fail to stand up to rigorous argumentation.

Although I concede that this assimilation is perhaps, to some extent, understandable, it is, I believe, partly a result of reading Nietzsche and his philosophy (especially his epistemology) without engaging with the philosophical tradition within which he was writing. It is my contention that to truly appreciate just how 'philosophical'² Nietzsche was as a thinker, it is paramount to read his philosophy in relation to the major philosophical paradigms of his time. Only in this way does a picture emerge of Nietzsche as a critical and highly incisive philosopher. The philosophical tradition against the backdrop of which Nietzsche started formulating his own epistemological claims was that inaugurated, nearly a century earlier, by Immanuel Kant. Although Nietzsche would end up writing on a

¹ Poellner, 1995, p. 4

² I put this word in inverted commas, for I believe that part of Nietzsche's project is also to undermine the idea that there is only one standard for practising philosophy. For Nietzsche, the very style which a philosopher adopts reflects not only his subject matter but also his various cultural and psychological influences, and to claim that philosophy should only be practiced as it has traditionally been in academia would, for Nietzsche, amount to a too myopic view of what philosophy amounts to. However, none of this ought to count as an exemption from having sound or at least thought-through reasons for one's philosophical claims, and my intention is to demonstrate that Nietzsche's thoughts on epistemology are the result of genuine involvement with the transcendental tradition.

whole host of philosophical issues, and he was never merely – or perhaps even predominantly – an epistemologist, he carried epistemological and metaphysical concerns with him for the whole of his productive life. Moreover, these concerns can be seen as descending and resulting from problems and issues which Nietzsche saw as inherent in the Kantian philosophy. Thus, in order to appreciate the philosophical import of Nietzsche's epistemology, it seems that we cannot do without a prior engagement with that philosophy which cast the most enduring and persistent shadow over Nietzsche's own epistemology – namely, Kant's doctrine of Transcendental Idealism.

The influence of Kant on Nietzsche is, of course, often noted in the secondary literature; however, this is often done through an engagement with Kant's philosophy as found in the writings of Arthur Schopenhauer. The reason for doing this is, to some extent, warranted, given the influence which Schopenhauer had on Nietzsche, especially in the latter's early period. Unfortunately, however, this engagement has often been done at the expense of engaging with Kant; thus, the over-riding assumption has often been that Nietzsche's epistemology ought to be analysed with respect to Schopenhauer's; and in this way we may come to gain a better understanding of the former's thought. This strategy, although partly useful, can also often lead to confusion, especially on points where Nietzsche seems to diverge or disagree with Schopenhauer's claims. It is useful to bear in mind that Schopenhauer's philosophy was itself heavily influenced by that of Kant, and so often when Nietzsche makes claims of which we find no precedent in Schopenhauer, or which at times are even anti-Schopenhauerian, he is in fact, wittingly or not, making a 'Kantian' point. Therefore, to merely consider Schopenhauer's epistemology in trying to make sense of Nietzsche, can leave big holes in our appreciation of the complexity of Nietzsche's arguments. However, by the same token, it is undoubtedly true that much of Nietzsche's knowledge of transcendental idealism, especially in his early career, was mediated by, and read through the prism of, Schopenhauer. Thus, it is equally true that to

consider Nietzsche merely in relation to Kant would have equally, if not more, detrimental effects for our understanding of the former.³ To understand and appreciate Nietzsche's epistemology, I believe, we must consider the epistemologies of both Kant and Schopenhauer to see how Nietzsche's own concerns grow out of problems which he locates in the former theories.

The purpose of this study is to present precisely such a reading of Nietzsche's epistemology. By examining first Kant's and then Schopenhauer's theories of objective experience, I wish to demonstrate Nietzsche's involvement and concern with epistemological issues arising from transcendental idealism. In the process of doing this I will also propose a new reading of Nietzsche's 'error theory' as it is found in his early writings. This new reading will demonstrate how Nietzsche's position emerges through him adopting certain Kantian (and anti-Schopenhauerian) stances on a number of issues which led to the divergence of Schopenhauer from Kant. Moreover, I wish to demonstrate that certain problems in the Kantian philosophy, such as the issue of the problematic concept of the thing-in-itself, followed Nietzsche throughout his productive life. The problem of the thing-in-itself, especially, is one which Nietzsche attacks from a whole host of perspectives, and I believe that this incessant concern of his with the concept of the thing-in-itself, perhaps more than any other topic, places his epistemology firmly within the tradition of post-Kantian (transcendental) idealism.

³ None of this is to deny or overlook the importance and influence of materialist readings of Kant which influenced the early Nietzsche, such as Lange's. However, I believe that positioning Nietzsche in relation to Kant gives us a much richer and more intricate philosophical system against which to evaluate Nietzsche's claims, than Lange's would.

Structure of Thesis

A general outline of the structure of the thesis will at this point be apposite and will help guide the reader through the trajectory of our study. The study is made up of four parts, looking at Kant, Schopenhauer, Early Nietzsche, and Late Nietzsche, respectively.

Part One – Kant: I begin with an account of Kant’s theory of cognition as found in the Transcendental Aesthetic and the Transcendental Analytic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Part One is broken down into three chapters. In Chapter 1, I lay out, in exegetical terms, topics in the Introduction and arguments of the Transcendental Aesthetic in CPR. Chapter 2 turns to critically examine the doctrine of transcendental idealism as established by Kant in the Aesthetic. Two issues will be of particular concern for our later discussions on Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. The first is Kant’s position on the ideality vs. reality of phenomenal objects; the second is Kant’s argument for the ontological denial of spatial properties from things-in-themselves, along with a consideration of the ‘neglected alternative’. Chapter 3 will explore key topics in the Transcendental Analytic. Here our concern lies with Kant’s claim regarding the discursivity of our cognition, the restriction of the categories to phenomena, and the distinction between the concepts of the thing-in-itself and that of a noumenon (which will help highlight a further distinction which Kant draws between two forms of cognition, namely one whose intuitions are receptive/passive and one whose intuitions are original/intellectual).

We should note at this point that in providing an account of Kant’s theory of cognition, I have been forced to omit many parts of CPR which, though they may be important for a thorough and sound understanding of Kant’s theory as a whole, were judged to be not as relevant to Schopenhauer’s and Nietzsche’s epistemological concerns. Thus, when considering the Analytic, having looked at the Transcendental Deduction of the categories, I then skip Chapters 1 and 2 of the Analytic of Principles, and focus again on Chapter 3: ‘On the ground of the distinction of all objects into *phenomena* and *noumena*’. It

is, needless to say, beyond the scope and intention of this study and beyond the abilities of its author, to provide a critical assessment of the *Critique* as a whole. But more importantly, such an endeavour would not necessarily assist us in making sense of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. After all, the purpose of our study is to use Kant (and Schopenhauer) to shed some new light on Nietzsche's thought; thus the guiding principle in choosing which parts of the *Critique* to explore was to consider only sections which influenced Schopenhauer and, especially, Nietzsche's thought, either because they objected to a Kantian premise or because they made use of a problematic one.

Part Two – Schopenhauer: In the second Part, I move from Kant's theory of cognition to consider Schopenhauer's account. Chapter 4 sets out the main points of contention between Kant's and Schopenhauer's theories of experience. We are interested in two fundamental revisions of the Kantian philosophy at the hands of Schopenhauer; the first is Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant's alleged misuse of the category of causality in inferring the existence of things-in-themselves and how Schopenhauer attempts to overcome this problem in his own theory; the second revision is Schopenhauer's claim, *pace* Kant, that we have a form of experience of the world which is, allegedly, non-conceptual. Chapter 5 turns to critically examine Schopenhauer's claims from a Kantian perspective. I will argue here that both of Schopenhauer's attempted revisions of Kant ultimately fail. Firstly, we will see that Schopenhauer's acceptance of the receptivity thesis means that he cannot, coherently, reject Kant's inference to the thing-in-itself as the ground of phenomena, and yet be left with a viable and sound theory of experience. Secondly, we will find that his attempted rejection of the discursivity thesis encounters serious problems which are difficult to overcome. The chapter will finish with a consideration of Schopenhauer's position on the reality vs. ideality of appearances debate.

Part Three – Early Nietzsche: In Part Three, I turn to Nietzsche's epistemological remarks as found in his early period writings. What we are interested in is exploring Nietzsche's early formulations of his 'error theory' – namely, the claim that experience falsifies reality. To this end, Chapter 6 begins by looking at the classical reading of Nietzsche's early error theory as revealing his commitment to a metaphysical correspondence theory of truth. I then consider passages from this period where Nietzsche seems to accept the possibility of the 'neglected alternative'. This in turn, I shall argue, means that if Nietzsche is arguing from a metaphysical correspondence criterion of truth, his arguments are aimed not at undermining the truth of our knowledge claims, but rather their recognisable justifiability. Thus, his 'error theory' cannot be contained in these arguments. However, even the sceptical line of thought presupposes that Nietzsche uses the thing-in-itself as the benchmark for truth; that is, it is the lack of guarantee of correspondence between appearances and things-in-themselves which generates a sceptical attitude regarding the former. This will take us back to the debate on the reality vs. ideality of appearances, and interestingly we find that on this topic Nietzsche is rather ambivalent. Thus, ultimately I will argue that Nietzsche is reluctant, or at least unsure, about launching sceptical arguments against appearances because they cannot be known to correspond to things-in-themselves. Chapter 7 then attempts to locate Nietzsche's error theory in his treatment of the role of the concept in experience. It will be argued that Nietzsche's claim that experience falsifies reality is a criticism of the discursivity of our understanding as falsifying a world of primary impressions. The cogency of this criticism will depend on where Nietzsche stands on the possibility vs. impossibility of non-conceptual experience. As we will see in Chapter 7, Nietzsche both subscribes to the discursivity thesis and claims that conceptual thought falsifies reality, a position which I will argue threatens to trivialize his error theory. In Chapter 8, I turn to criticise Nietzsche's account of empirical concept formation. Seeing as Nietzsche's account is almost identical to Kant's account in the *Jäsche Logik* (JL), I will engage with the relevant secondary material in Kant studies in making my criticism.

One point should be noted at this stage for clarification; one may wonder as to why I have focused on Nietzsche's error theory as it is found in the early period; especially, when claims to the effect that experience falsifies reality can be found throughout Nietzsche's oeuvre, and that he, arguably, puts forward stronger, and certainly a wider range of, arguments in his later writings. The reason for this is, firstly, that I believe there are several studies which deal with Nietzsche's epistemology (and his error theory) as found in his later writings in great detail, and that they provide a clear and comprehensive account of Nietzsche's epistemology. Two books in particular which I believe are worth mentioning are Peter Poellner's *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* and M.S. Green's *Nietzsche and the Transcendental Tradition*. The former covers a wide range of issues in Nietzsche's metaphysical and epistemological thought and provides an in-depth analysis of the said issues. The latter looks specifically at Nietzsche's relation to the neo-Kantian philosopher Afrikan Spir, to locate the presence of Spirean influenced arguments in Nietzsche's error theory. However, both studies focus predominantly on the later Nietzsche; Poellner, by his own admission, refers to Nietzsche's early epistemology only to the extent that these may help clarify Nietzsche's later positions,⁴ whereas Green focuses on the 'middle' and 'late' periods of Nietzsche for the simple reason that most of the Spir-type arguments are to be located in these periods. Moreover, Green's reading of the early error theory still assumes that Nietzsche is wedded to the metaphysical correspondence theory of truth⁵ – a point which I shall question. Thus, I believe that the already existing secondary material on Nietzsche's late epistemology combined with the paucity of material on the early error theory – and the nature of these analyses as ascribing to Nietzsche a commitment to the metaphysical correspondence theory of truth – justify the focus of Part Three.

⁴ Poellner, 1995, p. 1

⁵ Green, 2002, pp. 8 & 21-2

Part Four – Late Nietzsche: The final part of our study is composed of a single chapter which looks at Nietzsche's rejection, as incoherent, of the concept of a thing-in-itself, through an epistemology of perspectivism. In considering this line of argument I will look at why Nietzsche equates the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object, and secondly why he believes the concept of a non-perspectival object to be a contradiction in terms. I will finally turn to an assessment of Nietzsche's epistemology of perspectivism to show why I believe his own claims to require the thing-in-itself. Specifically, I will argue for why Nietzsche's equation of the concept of a thing-in-itself with that of a non-perspectival object presupposes the receptivity thesis with regard to our intuitions; and this thesis will be shown to presuppose the ability to make use of the concept of a mind-independent object. This final chapter will demonstrate both the extent to which Nietzsche was involved with the Kantian philosophy throughout his productive life, and his inability, much like Schopenhauer, to twist free of a reliance on the concept of the thing-in-itself.

Lastly, with regard to Parts Three & Four, I believe a brief word is needed to help clarify and justify my choice of texts. A difficult choice facing anyone who wishes to write on Nietzsche and epistemology/metaphysics, is the scarcity of aphorisms to choose from which deal with these issues from the published writings. One could, of course, adopt an approach, as Maudemarie Clark does, which chooses to almost disregard the notebooks, *tout court*.⁶ There may be some merits to this strategy in that one avoids assigning to Nietzsche claims which he perhaps contemplated but did not consider coherent or polished enough to be included in his philosophy proper. However, I believe that the strategy is beset with far more disadvantages. Most seriously, one is denying oneself a plethora of material which can assist in making sense of Nietzsche's epistemology. Moreover, the notebooks can at times contain more argumentation for positions which Nietzsche puts forward in his published writings. The benefit here is, of course, that these can help in

⁶ Clark, 1990, pp. 25-7

revealing whether or not the reasoning behind Nietzsche's assertions, in his published writings, are sound. The need for the notebooks is even more evident when dealing with the early writings. Here we find that the only place in his published writings where Nietzsche makes any substantial epistemological and metaphysical claims is in the *Birth of Tragedy*. Although this, of itself, is not necessarily a problem, the fact that Nietzsche, in his notebooks both before and after BT, and in his published writings after BT, consistently and repeatedly denies claims to metaphysical knowledge, I believe justifies the conclusion that one must *disregard* BT in determining Nietzsche's position. Ironically, I believe that, from this period, it is through the *published* writings that one may wrongly assign to Nietzsche an epistemological position which, it is safe to conclude, he never held with any serious conviction. In this respect, perhaps the most important piece of writing for our purposes is the short essay *On Truth and Lies in a Non-Moral Sense*, a paper which Nietzsche prepared for publication, but in the end, decided against publishing. Thus, much of Chapters 6 & 7 will draw on claims made by Nietzsche in TL and in the notebook entries of the surrounding period. In Chapter 9, I will again predominantly use the notebooks, but passages will be provided from the published writings which re-iterate the claims made in the notebook writings.

Overall, I hope this study will shed some new light on Nietzsche's relation to Kant's philosophy and especially to the latter's theory of Transcendental Idealism. My aim is to emphasise the extent of Nietzsche's involvement with Kantian epistemology, and how Nietzsche, ultimately, fails in overcoming the most serious issues in Kant's philosophy – issues which continue to cast their spell over philosophy, over two hundred years later.

PART ONE: KANT

Introduction

The first part of our study will focus on selected topics from the Introduction, Transcendental Aesthetic, and Transcendental Analytic of CPR. I will attempt, through the three chapters that make up Part One, to lay out certain commitments by Kant in his theory of experience which will recur in our discussions on Schopenhauer and Nietzsche in Parts Two, Three, and Four. By providing the backdrop against which the latter's theories will be evaluated, the account presented in this part will serve as the focal point for our study as that against which the deviation of Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's thought from Kant's, will be evaluated.

CHAPTER 1: The Transcendental Aesthetic

Introduction

This chapter will look at key issues in the Introduction, Preface, and the Transcendental Aesthetic of CPR. The purpose of the chapter is to lay out certain basic commitments by Kant which form cornerstones of the doctrine of transcendental idealism. The main topics to be considered are: Kant's understanding of the notion of *a priori*, the analytic vs. synthetic distinction, and his arguments for the *a priori* origin of our representations of space – as contained in the metaphysical and transcendental expositions. The present chapter will be primarily exegetical in nature, and I shall postpone critical examination of Kant's arguments to Chapter 2, where I will specifically revisit Kant's argument from geometry in greater detail to determine the legitimacy of his doctrine of transcendental idealism.

1. A priority

Any discussion on the *Critique* must undoubtedly begin with a treatment of the term *a priori* and the multiple roles and meanings which the term possesses for Kant. Indeed, the entire project of the *Critique* depends in very important respects on the ways in which Kant understands the concept of *a priority*, its relation to analytic and synthetic judgments, and how Kant's understanding of this relation diverged significantly from both his empiricist and rationalist predecessors.

Kant begins the Introduction to CPR by assuming what may look like a middle-ground between rationalism and empiricism regarding the origin of knowledge. He claims that "no cognition in us precedes experience, and with experience every cognition begins" (B1). He therefore acknowledges, along with the empiricists, the need for experience to possess knowledge of the world. Without *experience* of the world, there can be no *knowledge* of the world. However, he then proceeds to claim that "although all our cognition commences **with** experience, yet it does not on that account all arise **from** experience" (B1). The reason for this, Kant believes, is that it may still be the case that our knowledge of objects in experience is a result of sensory material given to us from without combined with "that which our cognitive faculty [...] provides out of itself" (B1); meaning, that it is possible that knowledge is the result of things being given to us through the senses combined with some form of activity on this sensory material by our cognitive faculty. We must, therefore, consider the possibility that there is such a thing as a cognition independent of experience or even sense impressions (B2). Such a cognition, which would precede all experience Kant calls *a priori*. He contrasts it with empirical or *a posteriori* cognitions, that is, cognitions derived from experience. Previous philosophers before Kant had drawn similar distinctions; Leibniz, for example, divided truths into 'truths of reason' and 'truths of fact'. The former include necessary truths which are, as Gardner phrases it, true "by virtue of logical principles" (Gardner, 1999, p. 52) whilst the latter are contingent

truths, known through experience. Hume, likewise, created a dual division of knowledge. On the one hand, he considered a class of knowledge as 'relations of ideas' which are *a priori*, analytic, and necessarily true (Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, 2000, Section 4, Part 1, p. 24). Contrasted with this Hume considered, what he called, 'matters of fact' which refer to states of affairs which may or may not be true. 'Matters of fact' refer to any knowledge derived from experience whereas 'relations of ideas' deal with truths through definitions.⁷ For example, the claim 'the table is green' would be a 'matter of fact' while the proposition 'every effect has a cause' is a 'relation of ideas'.⁸

We should note at this stage that Kant is not claiming that we can have *a priori* knowledge of the world, for knowledge requires affection of our senses by outer objects (that something be *given* to us). Kant's claim is rather, firstly, that an investigation is needed into the possibility that there are certain forms to which anything that is given to us from without, and therefore any knowledge, must conform; and, secondly, that this form is not itself derivable from experience for it is that which is imposed *on* experience.

Let us now consider in more depth what exactly constitutes a cognition as being *a priori*. Importantly for Kant, that a cognition occurs absolutely independently⁹ of all experience implies and entails the conditions of necessity and universality, which *a priori* cognitions fulfill.¹⁰ It also has, for Kant, implications regarding the origin of the cognition. Let us take these three points in turn.

Firstly, *a priori* cognitions indicate necessity. Any *a posteriori* cognitions, cognitions derived from experience, tell us merely that something is *thus and thus*, but never that it *must* be so (B3). Hume's criticism of the legitimacy of the concept of causality derived from this very point, namely that a causal proposition is a 'matter of fact' which is intending to express a necessary truth. A causal proposition, Hume claimed, cannot be a relation of

⁷ See also Bird, 2006, p. 51

⁸ See also Quine, 1971, p. 20.

⁹ For an explanation of Kant's notion of a cognition being 'absolutely' *a priori* please see B2-3

¹⁰ Kant follows Leibniz in regarding necessity and universality as criteria for *a priority*. See: Allison, 2004, p. 94.

ideas because we can just as easily abstract the cause from the event without falling into any conceptual contradiction. Thus, it must be a ‘matter fact’ – however, it is a matter of fact which is taken by us as indicating a necessary truth, and yet we know that such propositions can never afford us knowledge of necessity. But the causal proposition requires precisely such necessity; it states that “because something is the case, something else necessarily must also be” (P 4:257). For Hume, then, our putative experience of *necessary* connection is nothing but the repeated observation of constant conjunction between two events (x and y) from which we form a habit of associating the two together such that if, in the future, we observe x, we believe that this will be followed by y. As Kant puts it in the Prolegomena, in summarizing Hume’s point: “[Hume] concluded that reason completely and fully deceives herself with this concept [of causality], falsely taking it for her own child, when it is really nothing but a bastard of the imagination, which, impregnated by experience, and having brought certain representations under the law of association, passes off the resulting subjective necessity (i.e. habit) for an objective necessity (from insight)” (P 4:257-8). Although Kant will disagree with Hume regarding the objective validity of the concept of causality, he wholly subscribes to the belief that experience can only tell us about states of affairs as they are and never about how they must be. “Experience teaches us, to be sure, that something is constituted thus and so, but not that it could not be otherwise” (B3). Thus, if something presents itself to us as necessarily being the case, it is indicative of an *a priori* cognition which is not derived from experience.

The second condition which Kant believes to be a test of whether a cognition is *a priori* or not, is true or strict universality. Once again, Kant refers to the nature of knowledge acquired through experience and highlights that no knowledge derived from experience can ever tell us that something is *always* the case. The most we are entitled to claim regarding *a posteriori* knowledge is that “as far as we have yet perceived, there is no exception to this or that rule” (B3). But such universality, which Kant calls ‘assumed’ or ‘comparative’ universality (B3) does not preclude the possibility that in the future the rule

may be contravened. The necessity which governs *a priori* truths however, also implies that such truths are universally true. For if *x* and *y* are combined in such a way that *y* is *necessarily* a part of *x*, then given *x*, we can be sure of *y* to hold universally. Indeed, if there were an instance where *x* and *y* were revealed to not be combined, then clearly the combination of *x* and *y* was not a necessary, but rather merely a contingent, one.

Lastly, the *a priority* of a cognition, namely that we can know it to be true without recourse to empirical testing, has, for Kant, implications regarding the *source* of that cognition; specifically he believes that the source of such a cognition must be in us. Although Kant simply states, as early as B2, that an *a priori* cognition has its source in us¹¹, without any obvious reasoning, it seems that he saw this as a self-evident corollary of *a priority*. Kant's point seems to be that if we can know something to be true of the world prior to having experience of the world, then we must conclude that this feature is not a property of the world itself but is rather a way in which *we* must perceive the world, and that the property, therefore, has its source *in us* and not in the world.¹² Another way in which we may think of Kant's conclusion is by considering the notion of *a priori* cognition as cognition of necessity. If we agree with Hume and Kant that experience only gives us contingent knowledge of the world, then our possession of *necessary* knowledge must be because it is not knowledge of the world as such, but rather knowledge of what we bring to experience (or knowledge of the form in which we must experience what is given to us from without). Thus, that a cognition is *a priori*, also implies, Kant believes, that its source is in the subject of experience and not in the world. What this should demonstrate is the link between the two notions of *a priority*, necessity, and universality. *A priority*₁ (understood as the ability to confirm the truth of a judgment without recourse to empirical verification), strict universality, necessity, and *a priority*₂ (understood as the source of the cognition

¹¹ "It is therefore at least a question requiring closer investigation, and one not to be dismissed at first glance, whether there is any such cognition independent of all experience and even of all impressions of the senses. One calls such **cognitions *a priori***, and distinguish them from **empirical** ones, which have their sources *a posteriori*, namely in experience" (B2).

¹² We will return to this when we consider the arguments of the Aesthetic.

being subjective) are reciprocal and mutually entailing conditions. It will be helpful to bear these different features of *a priori* in mind in our later discussions on the doctrine of transcendental idealism as presented in the *Aesthetic*.¹³

2. Analytic vs. Synthetic Distinction

Another distinction which must be dealt with at the outset is that between analytic and synthetic judgments. Analytic judgments are those where the predicate is covertly implied or contained in the logical subject of the sentence. A judgment such as ‘all bachelors are unmarried’ is an analytic one insofar as the predicate ‘unmarried’ is contained in the concept of ‘bachelor’ and therefore adds nothing new to the subject of the judgment; we have not learnt anything new about bachelors after considering the proposition, for, assuming that we knew the meaning of ‘bachelor’ in the first place, we already knew that any and therefore all bachelors are, by definition, unmarried. Since the predicate in an analytic judgment does not add anything to the subject of the proposition, Kant says that analytic judgments do not expand our knowledge, but that they rather “explicate” our concepts and are therefore considered ‘judgments of clarification’ (B11 and P 4:266-7). Moreover, there is both necessity and strict universality in analytic judgments in that because the predicate adds nothing to the subject in the judgment, the subject can for the very same reason not be thought without the predicate. The reason why the predicate does not add anything to the subject is because the predicate is already contained in the subject – meaning that the subject is what it is by virtue of containing the predicate. It is, therefore, clear that if one abstracts the predicate, one is no longer left with the subject –

¹³ It should be noted that the relatedness of these three points as being corollaries and mutually implying conditions of one another is up for debate. Cassam, for example, shows that there is a difference between something being *justificationally a priori* and *derivationally a priori*, and that it is not straightforwardly clear if Kant’s categories are either. For a detailed discussion on this, see Cassam, 2003, pp. 87-108.

implying both necessity and strict universality. Thus, we may say that the common principle of all analytic judgments is the principle of contradiction. The principle of contradiction is defined by Kant as “the proposition that no predicate pertains to a thing that contradicts it” (A151/B190). Thus, in analytic judgments, we can know whether the predicate belongs to the subject or not simply by considering whether its denial would contradict the subject; in our case of ‘all bachelors are unmarried’, we can know, through the principle of contradiction, that if we deny the predicate ‘unmarried’ of a ‘bachelor’ (i.e. claiming that a bachelor can be married) then we are no longer thinking the concept ‘bachelor’. As Kant puts it in the Prolegomena: “For since the predicate of an affirmative analytic judgment is already thought beforehand in the concept of the subject, [the predicate] cannot be denied of that subject without contradiction” (P 4:267). Although our example was of a categorical judgment, we can use the principle of contradiction to determine the truth of any type of analytic judgment. Thus, if we take the example of the hypothetical analytic judgment “If there is a cause, then there will be an effect”, we can once again use the principle of contradiction to determine whether the proposition is true. In this case, we find that denying an ‘effect’ when we have posited a ‘cause’ contradicts the concept of a cause, which carries with it the concept of effect.¹⁴

Synthetic judgments, on the other hand, are those judgments whereby the predicate is wholly outside, and not contained in, the subject of the proposition. For example, ‘The table is green’ is a synthetic judgment for there is nothing about the concept ‘table’ which implies that it must be green, or any other one colour for that matter. When a predicate is combined with a subject in a synthetic judgment, the predicate adds something to the concept of the subject, something which is not inherent to the concept of the subject itself but which is nonetheless united with the subject. Kant, therefore, calls

¹⁴ *Pace* Quine, therefore, it would seem as if Kant’s notion of analyticity is not confined to “statements of subject-predicate form” (Quine, 1971, p. 21). Rather, the distinguishing feature of analytic judgments is that their truth can be ascertained merely through the principle of contradiction; a principle which as we have seen applies just as well to a hypothetical judgment.

synthetic judgments, 'judgments of amplification' (B11 and P 4:266) in that they expand our knowledge about the world and tell us something which we could not have known through a mere analysis of the concepts in the judgment.¹⁵ Thus, in a synthetic judgment, the predicate cannot be united with the subject simply through the principle of contradiction. However, this does not mean, to be sure, that the principle of contradiction is inapplicable to synthetic judgments; but rather that it can only serve as a necessary but not a sufficient condition for establishing the truth of the proposition. Thus, the predicate, though not contained in the concept of the subject, may still not of course contradict the subject. The connection between subject and predicate in all synthetic judgments requires some "third thing" which can connect or synthesize the two concepts, since neither is thought in the other analytically. This 'third thing' which connects the predicate with the subject in a synthetic judgment, and which Kant calls "the supreme principle of all synthetic judgments" is: "Every object stands under the necessary conditions of the synthetic unity of the manifold of intuition in a possible experience" (A158/B197). What, precisely, Kant means by this will become clear in Chapter 3 when we look at the Transcendental Deduction of the categories. All we should note for now is that in synthetic judgments the principle of contradiction is not sufficient for uniting the predicate with the subject and that some other thing is needed to unite the two.

If we now combine the *a priori/a posteriori* and analytic/synthetic distinctions we can see which judgments must be known in which ways. It is clear that analytic judgments must be known *a priori*. The element of strict universality and necessity in analytic judgments implies that they can be known to be true without reference to experience and that experience can never provide the ground for their truth insofar as experience could never tell us about necessity and universality. Thus, all analytic judgments are *a priori*. Likewise all *a posteriori* judgments must be synthetic. The incompatibility of *a posteriori*

¹⁵ For a re-iteration of Kant's discussion on analytic vs. synthetic judgments see Prolegomena Section 2.

and analytic judgments derives from the fact that the former requires experience in order to prove the truth of its judgment, whereas the latter contains its truth within itself. Furthermore, analytic judgments are indicative of universality and necessity which could never be obtained from experience, and experience is precisely what is required to verify an *a posteriori* judgment. An *a posteriori* judgment must therefore be one where the predicate is not contained in the logical subject of the judgment meaning that its validation can only come from experience; thus all *a posteriori* judgments must be synthetic. This leaves us with one combination which we are yet to consider, namely synthetic *a priori* judgments.

For Kant, such synthetic *a priori* judgments are not merely possible but are in fact actual; metaphysical, mathematical, and geometrical judgments, Kant claims, are all synthetic *a priori*. If we consider metaphysical judgments for now, it is clear that some metaphysical judgments, such as 'God is a perfect being', are analytic *a priori*, but these judgments do not, by virtue of being analytic, expand our knowledge, and they are not, for this very reason, of any interest to Kant. It is true that the predicate of perfection is contained within the concept of God, but this is merely a 'relation of ideas' or concepts, and tells us nothing about the world.¹⁶ The kind of metaphysical judgments that interest Kant are those which expand our knowledge, and which must, therefore, be synthetic. Kant considers the judgment "Everything that happens has its cause" (B13), or what is the same, 'every event has a cause'. The judgment is *a priori* in that it is taken to be a necessary truth, and yet it is also synthetic in that the predicate 'cause' is not contained in the concept of the subject 'event'. The question is: how is it that we come to form the belief that the relation between 'event' and 'cause' is a necessary one? Whence is this necessity derived? The necessity cannot be derived from experience as has already been established. Thus,

¹⁶ Descartes would of course disagree with this claim, but here we find a problem with the Ontological argument for God's existence from Kant's perspective; namely that it tries to expand our knowledge through an analytic argument, and it does this by assuming that existence is a property which can be included in analytic judgments.

either the necessary relation is *a priori* and has its source in the subject, or the relation is not in fact necessary and the belief in its necessity is the result of constant conjunction, as Hume would have us think. It will be Kant's task in the *Transcendental Analytic* to demonstrate that the concept of causality (like all the pure concepts of the understanding) is derived *a priori*, not from experience, and therefore to vindicate the belief in the necessary connection between 'event' and 'cause'.¹⁷ The question which remains at this stage is: How can Kant prove that there are synthetic *a priori* cognitions?

In the case of the *Aesthetic* Kant is dealing with intuitions as opposed to concepts.¹⁸ Now, if we assume that our intuitions must derive *solely* from objects external to ourselves, then we can never have *a priori* intuitions of them, and since knowledge/experience, for Kant, is the thoroughgoing activity of both intuitions and concepts, Kant would, at this stage, have to admit that one source of experience, namely the givenness of objects, is wholly *a posteriori*. If knowledge amounts to nothing but re-presenting what is outside of us as it is in itself, then we can conclude that there is no such thing as *a priori* cognition. For if knowledge is nothing but capturing things as they are, then we cannot claim to know anything of these things prior to any experience thereof. However, if on the other hand, we can identify certain forms to which any sensory material must conform in order for us to be able to experience objects, then there may be an element of *a priori* knowledge involved. We would then possess *a priori* knowledge of the world insofar as we would know to what form any object which we could possibly experience must conform. As Kant explains in the Preface to the *Critique*: "If intuition has to conform to the constitution of the objects, then I do not see how we can know anything of them *a priori*; but if the object (as an object of the senses) conforms to the constitution of our faculty of intuition, then I can very well represent this possibility to myself" (B xvii)¹⁹. The task of both the *Aesthetic* and *Analytic* is

¹⁷ See Ch. 3: 3 on the Transcendental Deduction.

¹⁸ For a clarification of the difference between intuitions and concepts, please see Section 3.

¹⁹ It may seem that we (and Kant) keep switching between speaking of cognition and intuitions, when we know that cognition requires both intuitions and concepts. But, what Kant is trying to demonstrate at this stage is that if we treat the input of both intuitions and concepts into cognition

to locate these conditions of the possibility of experience to which all experience must conform; the former deals with *a priori* conditions to which intuitions must conform and the latter deals with *a priori* conditions to which thought must conform; the former tells us about the forms of intuitions and the latter about the forms of thought, and both of them are, according to Kant, knowable and derived *a priori*.

3. Setting the Stage for the Aesthetic

Before we delve into the arguments of the *Aesthetic*, some preliminary remarks on Kant's theory of knowledge and his terminology will be apposite. Kant closes the introduction to the *Critique* by claiming that "there are two stems of human cognition, which may perhaps arise from a common but to us unknown root, namely sensibility and the understanding, through the first of which objects are given to us, but through the second of which they are thought" (B29). Kant is highlighting here the minimum requirement for us to have knowledge of objects: (a) that things be given to us through the senses, and (b) that this sensory material be thought by us through the understanding. In the *Aesthetic* Kant is dealing with the ways in which objects must be given to us in sensory experience.²⁰ Sensibility is defined as precisely "that faculty or capacity of mind by which we passively receive representations from things that affect us" (Shabel, 2010, p. 94). Sensibility, therefore, requires something to act upon it and is in this sense a receptive faculty which can only have a representation through *givenness*, that is, through being affected by

separately, we will see that both concepts and intuitions have a certain form; this form being *a priori* and to which other intuitions must conform and in accordance with which empirical concepts must be generated. Most importantly, these forms are not given to us from without. As we will see later, even empirical concepts are not *given* to us, but they do depend on the specific content of sense experience, whereas the pure concepts, though they require intuitions to have applicability, are not constrained by the specific content of intuitions in that they have applicability for whatever the specific content of intuitions are, so long as there be some content. This will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 3.

²⁰ The analysis of thought is contained in the Transcendental Analytic.

something. The representations which we form in sensibility through our senses being affected by things, Kant calls empirical intuitions (Ibid.). That which these intuitions are intended to represent, prior to the application of concepts, Kant calls an appearance. An appearance is, therefore, an empirical intuition which is as of yet non-conceptual, or as Kant calls it, the “undetermined object of an empirical intuition” (B34). This also means that an appearance is, at least at this stage in the *Critique*, regarded as an object before it is properly known.

Importantly for Kant, an appearance is not reducible to that which is given through the affection of outer objects on our sensibility, for every appearance contains both form and content. The content of an appearance – its matter – is given to us in sensory experience through the receptivity of sensibility, or, what is the same, through something acting on our sensibility. Yet, appearances are not merely the re-presentation of the content of sensory data; they are rather this data re-presented in a certain form. This form denotes the relations along which these sensations must be ordered. The form, as that which is imposed *on* sensory data, Kant claims cannot itself be derived *from* sensory experience. It is rather that which is imposed *on* sensory experience and must therefore not be derived *a posteriori* from experience but must lie ready “in the mind *a priori*” (A34).²¹ The representations of the forms of sensory experience Kant calls pure representations. The term ‘pure’ denotes the fact that nothing in sensation belongs or corresponds to the representation (B34), implying that the representation is not derived *a*

²¹ An important point must be noted at this stage, for the claim that that which orders our sensations in certain relations must be *a priori* seems more like an assumed premise by Kant rather than a claim that is argued for. Shabel notes that the strength of this premise depends on Kant’s ability to deny an empiricist counterclaim that our objects affect our sensibility as already ordered and containing within them the relations which Kant believes we impose (Shabel, 2010, p. 95). Guyer likewise claims that at this stage in the *Critique* Kant merely assumes that that which constitutes the form of our sensory representations cannot itself be derived from sensory experience. According to him, Kant does not provide an argument for why relations cannot be intuited *a posteriori* until B67 where its impossibility is ascribed to the non-relationality of things-in-themselves. Guyer argues that Kant’s assumption that things-in-themselves are not relational is influenced by a long-standing belief in the philosophical tradition, from Leibniz to Locke, that relations are not in the world but rather “‘ideal’”, as Leibniz would call it, or “‘extraneous’” to the real existence of things and “‘superinduced’”, as Locke would have it (Guyer, Kant and the Claims of Knowledge, 1987, p. 351).

posteriori but rather *a priori*. Kant calls this pure form of sensibility a pure or *a priori* intuition (B 34-5). It will be the task of the *Aesthetic* to locate these *a priori* intuitions, that is, these pure forms to which all empirical intuitions must conform. Kant will ultimately claim that there are two such pure forms of intuition, namely space and time. The *Aesthetic* will then attempt to prove firstly that space and time are *a priori* forms of intuition, and secondly that they are *nothing but* such forms of intuition; together these two statements amount to Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism.

4. Arguments of the Aesthetic

The arguments of the *Aesthetic* are divided into two sections: one on space and the other on time, with each section containing a Metaphysical and a Transcendental Exposition. Through the expositions Kant attempts to show that space and time are *a priori* forms of intuition. Like most commentators I shall only consider the arguments for space. However, this will be dealt with more as an overview, for our real interest lies in Kant's Conclusions and General Remarks of the *Aesthetic* where he claims that space and time are *nothing but a priori* forms of intuition, which will be the focus of Chapter 2.

4.1. The Metaphysical Exposition

The metaphysical exposition of space is broken down into four separate, though linked, arguments.²² The first two attempt to demonstrate that our representation of space is *a priori*, whilst the latter two attempt to secure for our representation of space the status of, originally, being an intuition as opposed to a concept.

The first argument claims that in order to have any representations of outer objects²³, there must already be a presupposition of the representation of space, and that the representation of space is therefore an *a priori* one (B38). Let us assume that the representation of space is not derived *a priori*. In that case it must be an empirical representation, derived *a posteriori*, or what is the same, derived from experience of outer things. But any representation of outer things already presupposes a representation of space. The implication of this is that space cannot be derived from our experience of outer objects if in order to experience these objects *as* objects we must already presuppose that we have a representation of space. And if our representation of space is not derived *a posteriori*, then it must be derived *a priori*. Bird argues that although this first argument establishes the *priority* of the representation of space over any representations of outer objects, it does not establish space's *a priority*. He gives the example that the concept 'red' presupposes the concept of a colour, but that we would not conclude from this that the concept of a colour is derived *a priori*, and neither would Kant (Bird, 2006, p. 141). Bird's analogy, however, does not seem to fit the example which Kant deals with. For Kant is talking about the *whole* of experience, and as such, if something which is required for *any* experience is not given in experience, then it must be accounted for in a non-*a posteriori* (*a priori*) way. In Bird's analogy, the concept 'colour' cannot be said to be *a priori* simply

²² In the A-edition there are five arguments, one of which Kant removed for the B-edition and instead called the Transcendental Exposition.

²³ On the popular reading of Kant, the use of the term 'outer object' does not mean physically external but rather 'other than' or 'distinct from' oneself (Bird, 2006, p. 141; Gardner, 1999, p. 74; Allison, 2004, p. 100).

because it grounds the concept of another *a posteriori* representation; we cannot rule out that the concept of 'colour' is derived *a posteriori* simply because it grounds other *a posteriori* representations. But, in Kant's example we are considering a representation which grounds *all a posteriori* representations. Thus, if the representation of space is the ground for all *a posteriori* representations, then this representation cannot itself be derived empirically, and must therefore, by elimination, be an *a priori* representation.

I mentioned above that the term *outer* has traditionally been interpreted by commentators as referring to 'other than' or 'distinct from' as opposed to 'physically outside'. This reading of 'outer' is particularly appealing in that it overcomes the charge of tautology whereby Kant would be saying that in order to represent an object as being spatially extended, one must represent space. However, despite its appeal, the fundamental shortcoming of this reading is that it simply does not fit the text of the Aesthetic. Kant explicitly and blatantly asserts that the terms 'outer' and 'outside me' refer "to something in another place in space from that in which I find myself" (A23/B38). How then are we to read Kant's first argument? Daniel Warren provides a reading of the first *a priority* argument which seems to capture Kant's intentions very well. On Warren's account, Kant's argument is directed against a Leibnizian account of space as "only determinations or relations of things" (A23/B37). Leibniz gives an account of how we come to possess the representation of space by starting with spatial relations between objects (such as distance and situation) to claiming that our representations of place and of space are derived from these spatial relations (Warren, 1998, p. 205). Warren's argument, thus, focuses on the link between "the representation of the space that objects occupy [...] and the representation of the spatial relations that these objects bear" (Warren, 1998, p. 198), and whether the former is derivable from the latter. He then argues why we cannot derive the physical space an object occupies from its spatial relations to other objects, because in representing objects as merely *relationally* spatial, I must already have a representation of space – namely the space that the objects occupy. Warren's point is that a Leibnizian

conception of spatiality as merely relational must presuppose a prior representation of space which is not relational. As Warren puts it: “When we represent objects as bearing spatial relation to one another (for example, being outside of one another), we presuppose a representation of the space these objects are *in*” (Warren, 1998, p. 202). This reading of the first argument of the metaphysical exposition also makes sense of, and is in line with, Kant’s concluding remark on the argument where he says: “Thus, the representation of space cannot be obtained *from the relations of outer appearance* through experience” (A23/B38, my emphasis). Importantly then, and in line with his reading of the first *a priori* argument, Warren seems to deny that this argument of Kant’s, on its own, is intended to (or capable of) establishing the *a priori* of space, and that Kant also requires the second argument to draw this conclusion.

The second argument proceeds from the claim that space as a necessary representation must be an *a priori* one. “One can never represent that there is no space, though one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it” (A24/B38). The fact that we can represent space without representing objects in space reinforces the argument about the priority of a representation of space over outer objects. Additionally, our inability to represent the absence of space implies that space is an absolutely necessary representation, one which we cannot fail to represent insofar as we wish to represent anything. Given that our representation of space is not a contingent representation but an absolutely necessary one, we must conclude that it is not derived *empirically*, meaning that it must have its source *a priori*. The two arguments taken together can be seen as establishing that space is an *a priori* representation.

The latter two arguments focus on space as an intuition as opposed to a concept. I will provide a rough sketch of these arguments as they are of less significance for our purposes. Kant proceeds by showing us that our representation of space differs significantly from how we think of a concept, and seeing as how representations must either be intuitions or concepts, Kant concludes that space is an intuition. The first

argument refers to the relation between parts of space and the whole of space compared with the relation between instances of a concept and the concept. Parts of space all refer to the same, unique thing, namely space. As Kant says: “one can only represent a single space, and if one speaks of many spaces, one understands by that only parts of one and the same unique space” (A25/B39). The parts of space are not related to space as instances of a concept are related to the concept in general. Concepts have either parts or instantiations. Parts of a concept, such as ‘human’, would be two-legged, mammal, etc. whereas instantiations of the concept would be any particular individual, such as Immanuel Kant. There is a clear difference in a concept between its instantiations and its parts. In the case of space, however, we find that the whole of space is made up of parts of space, and each of these parts is qualitatively identical with the whole of space. Space, as a whole, is made of parts which are identical with it. Concepts on the other hand are certainly not identical with their parts, but rather are *composed* of their parts. Space is thus not a concept and must therefore be an intuition. But Kant’s conclusion that space is an intuition is not merely derived from a process of elimination. Rather, because every instantiation of space represents the same unique space²⁴, the representation of space is a representation of an individual object. In contrast to concepts which represent things in general by means of certain marks, intuitions are immediate representations of particular individuals (Smit, 2000, p. 236).²⁵

The last argument of the metaphysical exposition draws attention to the fact that “space is represented as an infinite **given** magnitude” (A25/B39). This does not mean that we represent infinite space, but rather that when we represent space it is represented as being limitless or unbounded.²⁶ Once again, the difference with a concept lies in the relationship between parts and instances of space compared to those of concepts. A

²⁴Two separate parts of space do not, of course, represent the same area of space, but the properties of the parts of space are the same as the properties of space as a whole, and space as a whole is made up of these parts. Thus, parts of space are not related to space as a whole the way marks of a concept are related to the concept.

²⁵ See also A320/B376-6 and JL, 1992, p. 589n.

²⁶ See Bird, 2006, p. 146 and Gardner, 1999, p. 79.

concept may be said to contain an infinite number of instantiations of itself but not an infinite number of parts; or as Allison puts it, concepts may extensionally involve infinity, but not intensionally (Allison, 2004, p. 111). The parts of a concept (its intension) are its marks which go together to define that concept. If any concept were to contain within itself an infinite number of marks, it would forever be incapable of being defined and cognised. Our representation of space, however, is very different from this because, as mentioned earlier, the parts of space are its instantiations. This means that space has not only an infinite number of instantiations (infinite extension) of itself but also an infinite number of parts within itself (infinite intension). Thus, space is not a concept and must be an intuition.

4.2. Transcendental Exposition

The four arguments of the metaphysical exposition, together, are intended to have demonstrated that our representation of space is an *a priori* intuition. But Kant also provides a ‘transcendental exposition’ of space. The transcendental exposition is different in nature to the arguments of the metaphysical exposition as here Kant is attempting to deduce the *a priori* of space through the existence of some other body of *a priori* synthetic knowledge, supposing that the only way for the claims of this latter body to contain synthetic *a priori* truths is for our representation of space to be an *a priori* intuition. The question is how can Kant establish this claim?

The body of knowledge which Kant deals with in his discussion on space is geometry. Firstly, we know that geometrical claims cannot be derived merely from geometrical concepts and are therefore not analytic but rather synthetic claims (P 4:269).²⁷ A geometrical claim, such as ‘the sum of the interior angles of a triangle in two dimensions is equal to two right angles’ is not something which we can derive through a mere analysis

²⁷ As Kant puts it in CPR: “it is clear that from mere concepts no synthetic cognition but only merely analytic cognition can be attained” (A47/B64-65).

of the concept of a triangle; the concept of a triangle merely states that it is a figure enclosed by three straight lines, and through an analysis of such a concept we could never arrive at the geometrical claims above. What is needed for that is for us to represent to ourselves a triangle in intuition and through this we can derive geometrical propositions from it. This means that geometrical claims are synthetic. However, the truths of geometry are at the same time necessarily true with apodictic certainty. This must also mean that their truths, despite being synthetic, are also *a priori*, and not derived *a posteriori* from experience.

If we now establish that geometrical judgments are *a priori* synthetic, we are not far from establishing that our representation of space must be that of an *a priori* intuition. Geometry is the science of space, and its truths hold precisely *of* space; the truths of geometry denote the truths about spatial relations. The question then is what must our representation of space be if we can make *a priori* synthetic claims about space? Kant says that this representation must firstly be originally *intuitive* and not *conceptual* (B40-41). If our representation of space was that of a mere concept, any truth claims which we could make about space (in geometry) would have to be contained in our spatial concepts themselves. That is, our claims about space could never be expansive, but rather only ever clarificatory. To put it differently, if our representation of space was that of a concept, we could only ever make analytic truth claims about space; namely claims that are already implicit in the definition of our spatial/geometrical concept. However, in geometry we can make claims about space which transcend what is contained in our spatial concept. As was argued earlier, in geometry we make *synthetic* truth claims about space and spatial properties. This must, therefore, imply that our representation of space is not conceptual but intuitive. It is only through an intuition of space that a geometer can go about deducing that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. If all the geometer had was the spatial concept of a straight line, he could only ever claim things which are contained in the definition of a straight line, which to be sure does not include that a straight line is the

shortest distance between two points (at least in two dimensions). As Kant puts it in the Prolegomena “my concept of the straight [line] contains nothing of magnitude, but only a quality. The concept of the shortest is therefore wholly an addition and cannot be extracted by any analysis from the concept of the straight line. Intuition must therefore be made use of here, by means of which alone the synthesis is possible” (P 4:269).

Secondly, we know the synthetic truth claims which geometry makes about space to be true of necessity. From this Kant believes we can conclude that our representation of space must be an *a priori* representation. If we can know certain things (geometrical truths) to be true of space necessarily, we can know that these truths are not derived *a posteriori* from experience, but *a priori*, without recourse to experience. If they are derived *a priori* (not from without) then they must have their source within ourselves. But, since these truths are *truths about space*, the representation of space, namely, that about which these claims are true, can also not be derived *a posteriori* from experience. For if our representation of space was derived empirically, how could we then possess necessary truths about space, which by definition cannot be derived from experience? To put it differently, if our representation of space was derived from experience, it would be impossible for us to have *a priori* knowledge about space with apodictic certainty, as we do in geometry, which, by virtue of being apodictic cannot be derived from experience. This must imply that our representation of space itself is an *a priori* representation, in that it is necessary and “has its seat merely in the subject” (B 41). We can now, again, see the interplay between the different senses in which Kant uses the term *a priori*. The three meanings of *a priori* as necessary, universal, and subjective are, for Kant, corollaries of one another. If a certain representation is shown to be necessary, it must also be universal and subjective (by which Kant means that it has its source in the subject, not in the world in and of itself).

Conclusion

I have attempted in this chapter to provide the rough outlines of basic commitments and arguments by Kant which form the foundation of his doctrine of transcendental idealism. I have, moreover, presented Kant's arguments as charitably as possible in order to demonstrate what he wishes to, and believes his arguments to, establish. In the next chapter we will consider Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism more closely and determine the extent to which the arguments presented in the metaphysical and transcendental expositions support Kant's conclusions.

Chapter 2: Kant's Doctrine of Transcendental Idealism

Introduction

The two expositions of space (and time) in the *Aesthetic* have, according to Kant, established that space and time are *a priori* subjective forms of intuition which are derived not from experience, but are rather presupposed *for* experience and, as such, have their source in us. But the claim that space and time are subjective forms of intuition is only half of what Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism amounts to. The further claim which constitutes this doctrine is that space and time are *nothing but* our subjective forms of intuition. This second claim, which we may label Kant's ontological denial of space and

time, has historically been met with suspicion. Specifically, it is alleged that Kant's ontological denial overlooks the possibility of spatio-temporality being both transcendently ideal and real (the 'neglected alternative'). The focus of this chapter is to engage with this debate to decide what exactly Kant is legitimately allowed to claim regarding the transcendental status of space and time. In considering the arguments of the neglected alternative and Kant's ontological denial, we shall also have to familiarize ourselves with certain Kantian terminologies; specifically we will have to explore the transcendental vs. empirical distinction. What I wish to demonstrate is that Kant's argument for his ontological denial of space, which gets its support from Kant's transcendental exposition (argument from geometry), ultimately fails to establish his intended conclusion – namely that space and time can be known not to be properties of things-in-themselves. I will conclude that Kant's argument from geometry fails to rule out the possibility of the neglected alternative. The importance of Kant's position on this will become clearer in Part Three when we consider Nietzsche's early epistemology. As we will see, Nietzsche's acceptance of the neglected alternative means that his putative attacks on empirical knowledge from a metaphysical correspondence view of truth are aimed not at undermining the *truth* of our knowledge claims, but rather their *justification*. But in order to appreciate the strength of Nietzsche's position, it will be important to consider the neglected alternative along with Kant's ontological denial in some detail to be able to definitively determine what Nietzsche is attacking in his early writings. I will finish the chapter by considering a prominent area of debate in Kant studies, which has come to be known as the one-world vs. two-world debate. Although this debate is far too wide ranging in scope to be dealt with in detail in this chapter, what I wish to draw attention to is the compatibility of the one-world interpretation with Kant's claim that the relation between appearances and things-in-themselves is one of grounding. This conclusion will be of particular importance when we consider Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant's philosophy in Part Two.

1. Doctrine of Transcendental Idealism

We established in the preliminary remarks to the *Aesthetic* that according to Kant, in order for something to be a possible object of experience for us (appearance), it must satisfy the conditions of possibility of experience, which first and foremost include spatio-temporality. Space and time are, therefore, conditions of cognition, or what is the same, that to which objects must conform in order for them to be objects of cognition for us. These objects considered apart from how they are given to us in sensible intuition as appearances, or what is the same, considered apart from that which makes them appearances (their spatio-temporality), are things-in-themselves.²⁸

It should be clear from this description that Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism is not some form of agnosticism regarding the relation of space and time to things-in-themselves. It is rather a "harshly dogmatic insistence that we *can be quite sure* that thing as they are in themselves *cannot be* as we represent them to be" (Guyer, Kant and the Claims of Knowledge, 1987, p. 333). As Kant puts it himself in the opening line of the Conclusions to the expositions: "Space represents no property at all of any things in themselves nor any relation of them to each other, i.e., no determination of them that attaches to objects themselves and that would remain even if one were to abstract from all subjective conditions of intuitions" (A26/B42). He continues to say that "Space is nothing other than *merely* the form of all appearances of outer sense" (Ibid., my emphasis). An immediate objection arises to Kant's assertion to the effect that things-in-themselves are not spatio-temporal when we consider Kant's theory of cognition – an objection first raised by F.H. Jacobi. Kant has already said that space and time are conditions for the cognition of any objects, meaning that we can only have cognition of things insofar as they are spatio-temporal, which amounts to the claim that we can only have knowledge of appearances,

²⁸ The issue of whether things-in-themselves and appearances constitute one and the same or two different sets of objects will be dealt with in Section 4.

and never things-in-themselves. Now, even the negative claim regarding things-in-themselves lacking spatio-temporality is still a claim of knowledge *about* things-in-themselves. Is there not then an inherent contradiction involved in claiming non-spatio-temporality for things-in-themselves? Guyer believes that Kant is not necessarily guilty of the charge of contradiction. His point is that Kant's claim regarding the non-spatio-temporality of things-in-themselves "is philosophical knowledge by means of argument, not first-order synthetic *a priori* knowledge by means of intuitions and concepts" (Guyer, Kant and the Claims of Knowledge, 1987, p. 336). Guyer's claim seems a bit puzzling since the proposition that "things in themselves are not spatio-temporal" seems precisely to be a synthetic claim which however can be verified neither *a priori* nor *a posteriori*. However, what Guyer seems to be claiming is that if Kant can establish that our possession of an *a priori* truth about objects is incompatible with those objects possessing that property independently of our cognition of them, then Kant is indeed justified. As we will see, Kant's ontological denial is premised on precisely such a strategy whereby he believes that he can move from an epistemic claim to an ontological one. However, the success of his argument is less clear than Kant would have us think.

2. Transcendental vs. Empirical Distinction

Before we turn to Kant's arguments for his ontological denial – i.e. the denial of spatio-temporality from things-in-themselves – we must familiarise ourselves with certain terminologies of which Kant makes repeated use along with some distinctions which he draws. These will be important in understanding what exactly Kant believes his doctrine of transcendental idealism amounts to and what the scope of its status as a form of idealism is. Specifically, we need to take a closer look at what exactly Kant means by terms such as

‘transcendental’ and ‘empirical’ and how these can each be real (objective) or ideal (subjective).

Immediately after the two expositions of space, Kant clarifies what he means by the transcendental ideality of space and how this relates to empirical reality. We should note that the term ‘empirical’ is no longer, or at least at this point, contrasted with *a priori* but rather with transcendental. The empirical/transcendental distinction is best understood as different modes of reflecting on the same thing in consciousness. To consider an object empirically is to consider it from our human cognitive perspective as subject to our epistemic conditions, such as space and time. Objects that are considered from this perspective are *empirically real*. Thus, all objects of experience, that is to say all spatio-temporal objects, and even space and time themselves, are empirically real. The empirical perspective, therefore, encompasses both *a priori* and *a posteriori* representations. To consider objects from the transcendental perspective, on the other hand, is to consider them as they are *abstracted from* our mode of cognition, not as they are *through* our mode of cognition. In order for an object to be transcendently real, the object would have to possess its constitution independently of our mode of cognition. If we can establish that a certain determination of a thing is dependent on our cognitive faculty in some way, and at the same time is necessary for our representation of any object, then this object is transcendently ideal. Thus, when Kant says that space and time are transcendently ideal, he does not mean by this that they are illusory in any sense. Space, time, and all spatio-temporal objects have empirical reality of which we can be absolutely certain. In fact, it is the very certainty of space and time which means that they *must* be transcendently ideal. The reason for this goes back to the important link noted earlier between necessity, universality, and *a priority*. It is precisely because our representations of space and time are absolutely necessary and universal, which means, for Kant, that they cannot have been derived from experience of the world in and of itself, but must rather

have their source in us; space and time are, therefore, transcendently ideal.²⁹ For this very same reason, space and time are also empirically real, that is, they have objective validity. The fact that space and time are necessary representations, and therefore conditions of the possibility of cognition and experience, means that *any* object which we could possibly experience must always be spatio-temporal, and this is true for all beings with our mode of cognition. Thus, with regards to the world of experience, the only world with which we are ever confronted and can ever know, space and time are indeed objectively real. Kant explains this result as follows:

“Our expositions teach the **reality** (i.e. objective validity) of space in regard to everything that can come before us externally as an object, but at the same time the **ideality** of space in regard to things when they are considered in themselves through reason, i.e. without taking account of the constitution of our sensibility. We therefore assert the **empirical reality** of space (with respect to all possible outer experience), though to be sure at the same time its **transcendental ideality**, i.e. that it is nothing as soon as we leave aside the condition of the possibility of all experience” (A28/B42).³⁰

We must take care to be absolutely clear on the type of subjectivity which is implied by space and time being *a priori* subjective representations, as the subjective status of these representations is unlike any other representations which we usually denote through the concept *subjective*. Indeed, space and time are the only subjective intuitive representations which may also be called *a priori* objective (A28/B42). What Kant is drawing attention to at this point is the difference between the kind of subjectivity pertinent to space and time compared to the subjectivity of what Locke would call secondary qualities. Kant wants to avoid us thinking of space and time’s subjectivity the way we consider secondary qualities as not belonging to our objects of experience, in and of themselves. When Locke claims

²⁹ The objection of the neglected alternative will be considered in the next section.

³⁰ For a reiteration of the same point by Kant, this time with respect to time, please see A35/B52.

that properties such as the smell or colour of a rose do not pertain to the object, he is denying certain properties of an *appearance*, not of a *thing-in-itself*. The primary and secondary quality debate is one regarding that which is subjective and that which is objective in an *appearance*. Primary and secondary qualities are always attributed to or denied of objects of experience, which *as* objects of experience are already necessarily spatio-temporal and therefore appearances, not the things-in-themselves (A29-30/B44-45).

The important result of the classification of space and time as transcendently ideal yet empirically real is that the *a priori* subjective status of space and time is not intended to reduce these representations to anything like illusions (such as a rainbow [A45/B62]), which in Kant's terminology would be to consider them empirically ideal, that is, not-real when considered from *within* the human cognitive perspective, or at least not having objective validity within the empirical sphere. The conclusion that space and time are transcendently ideal is not intended in any sense to devalue or make defunct scientific or empirical knowledge. "This [empirical] reality of space and time, further, leaves the certainty of experiential cognition untouched" (A39/B56). Arguments to the effect that the doctrine of transcendental idealism serves to undermine the certainty of our knowledge of the objects of (empirical) reality, are guided by a basic misunderstanding about the status of space and time in Kant's philosophy. As I have attempted to demonstrate, not only does transcendental idealism not cast doubt on our certainty of spatio-temporality, but it is rather, according to Kant, the purported apodicticity of the spatio-temporality of all objects which makes space and time transcendently ideal.

2.1. Transcendental vs. Empirical Idealism

The line of argument presented above may be reproached for leaving the status of Kant's transcendental idealism unclear compared to idealism as it is normally understood. Indeed, following the publication of the A-Edition of the CPR, Kant was charged by Christian Garve of returning to classical idealism – a charge which Kant was adamant resulted from a complete misunderstanding of his doctrine. The issue we want to now consider is the physical status of appearances. Although I do not wish to spend too much time on this issue, I believe a short discussion will be helpful in clarifying and defending Kant against a charge of phenomenalism or empirical idealism.³¹ On an idealist reading, through “equating Kantian ‘appearances’ with ‘mere representations’, critics take this to mean that we know only the contents of our own minds, that is, ideas in the Berkeleian sense” (Allison, 2004, p. 5). The problem which Kant faces on such a reading, the critics claim, is that it entails either (a) that things only seem to be spatial, implying that our consciousness of an extended world is somehow illusory, or (b) that appearances/representations really are spatial which would imply that our ideas are extended (Allison, 2004, pp. 5-6). However, we find in the Fourth Paralogism, an argument by Kant directed at precisely this concern. There Kant presents the problem of the physical status of outer objects as resulting from the belief that their existence can only be inferred as the cause of given perceptions, rendering their existence doubtful (A367). On Allison's reading of Kant, a reading which seems in line with the text, the confusion whereby Kant is seen as an empirical idealist stems from a misunderstanding regarding the status of outer objects. It is the belief that outer physical objects are things-in-themselves which leads to the thought that all we have immediate awareness of are ideas in our minds (Allison, 2004, p. 24). In the fourth paralogism, Kant

³¹ Note that phenomenalism differs in its commitments from idealism, but the two are being treated together here because what sets them apart from Kant's transcendental idealism is that both of the former treat outer objects as things-in-themselves. For a discussion on the difference between idealism and phenomenalism, see Allison, 2004, pp. 38-42.

makes this point explicit: “If we let outer objects count as things in themselves, then it is absolutely impossible to comprehend how we are to acquire cognition of their reality *outside us*, since we base this merely on the representation, which is *in us*” (A378, my emphasis). This passage may seem as a confirmation of Berkeley’s critique of materialism and if so, Kant would be identifying what is ‘real’ with the ideas in our mind (Allison, 2004, p. 24). However, to see how Kant’s position differs from that of an empirical idealist, we must note the senses in which Kant uses the terms ‘outside us’ and ‘in us’. When Kant says that appearances or space and time themselves, are merely ‘in us’ he means that they are transcendently in the mind, and this is not to be confused with how we ordinarily think of something being mental or ideal. Thus, the transcendental realist position (which leads to empirical idealism) assumes that the things which affect us are objects with spatio-temporal properties and relations; and it proceeds from this to conclude that of such objects we only have awareness through our awareness of our mind’s content. As Kant puts it: “transcendental realism [...] finds itself required to give way to empirical idealism because it regards the objects of outer sense as something different from the senses themselves and regards mere appearances as self-sufficient beings that are found external to us” (A372). But in Kant’s theory, the ‘things’ that affect us are non-spatio-temporal things-in-themselves (A372) *and furthermore* the self that they act upon is not an empirical, but a transcendental or noumenal, self. The fallacy in the empirical idealist interpretations is that their analysis takes place at the empirical level, whereby they take spatio-temporal objects to be in a causal relation with my empirical self. From this conflation results all the ensuing talk about appearances being merely mental because I only have awareness of my mind’s content. This is precisely what Kant is drawing attention to in the aforementioned quote from the fourth paralogism. Thus, we can now see how Kant’s position can at one and the same time maintain both that appearances really are spatial and that appearances are in us; appearances are in us, insofar as we are referring to our noumenal selves – or that conception of our ‘selves’ which makes empirical experience possible. However,

empirically speaking, spatiality is real and spatial appearances are indeed outside of us. Part of the confusion seems to stem here from the fact that Kant makes the very feature which we consider as constitutive of whether something is mental or physical, namely spatiality, into a mental construct. But, when we remember that the mental-ness of this feature is assigned to a noumenal, and not an empirical self, we see why Kant can maintain this claim without demoting spatiality to the same mental status as empirically mental items, such as pains. Indeed, it is only by bearing this important distinction in mind that we can also make sense of Kant's distinction between inner and outer sense. On an idealist or phenomenalist reading of Kant, the confusion results from treating spatiality as if it were a representation in inner sense (empirically mental); whereas for Kant inner sense and outer sense are both confined to the empirical; whereas the question as to the origin of (empirical) appearances must be dealt with from a transcendental level, in order to avoid the charge of circularity.³²

3. Ontological Denial and the Neglected Alternative

With these distinctions in mind, we may now turn to consider the arguments for Kant's ontological denial. We may wish to consider two different versions of Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism. The first is a stronger version which claims that things-in-themselves are not spatio-temporal, while the second is a weaker claim that subscribes to a form of agnosticism regarding the relation of spatio-temporality and things-in-themselves.

³² In the b-edition Kant added a section titled 'Refutation of Idealism' where he once again attempts to distinguish his transcendental idealism from the 'material' idealisms of Descartes (problematic) and Berkeley (dogmatic). However, there Kant attempts to show that inner sense (my awareness of my mind's contents) requires, and is only possible on, the presupposition of the reality of outer sense. Thus, Kant's argument here attempts to draw a link between my empirical awareness of myself in time as necessarily requiring an awareness of something that persists in perception which is distinct from me (see B275 - B288).

Although Kant, undoubtedly, has the stronger version in mind in his conclusions of the *Aesthetic*, the weaker version is important to consider given that, as we shall see, it is much more defensible. Let us consider the arguments for Kant's belief in the stronger version; how can we know things-in-themselves to lack spatio-temporality?

At A26/B42, as we quoted earlier, Kant claims that space and time are not properties of things-in-themselves as things that would remain were we to abstract from our "subjective conditions of intuition". On what grounds does Kant make this assertion? "For", as he continues, "no determinations, whether absolute or relative, can be intuited prior to the existence of the things to which they belong, and none, therefore, can be intuited *a priori*" (A26/B42). Our *a priori* forms of intuition of space and time, as conditions of cognition, act as determinations of objects *a priori*. By this we mean that we can know prior to any experience of an object, that the object will possess spatio-temporality. But, Kant asks us, if spatio-temporality was truly a determination of the object, how could we then know that the object possessed it *prior* to having had any experience of it whatsoever? The fact that we can know space and time to necessarily pertain to any possible object of experience, therefore, is taken to imply that these determinations are not part of things-in-themselves, but rather that they determine how we will and must experience any objects. If they were in objects in themselves, then we could never know that they pertained to objects prior to experience – which we can and do know – and if they are not in objects in and of themselves, then they must be in us.

3.1. The Neglected Alternative

The argument which has been presented has been the subject of controversy dating back to the 19th century. The objection was first raised by H.A. Pistorius, and later made famous through a dispute between neo-Kantian scholars Adolf Trendelenburg and Kuno Fischer.³³

Fischer argued in defence of Kant's position, whereas Trendelenburg pointed to a possibility which Kant had allegedly overlooked, what has now come to be known as the 'Neglected Alternative'. Trendelenburg's position may be summarized as follows. The trouble with Kant's ontological denial is that he proceeds on a strictly dualistic conception of the options regarding space and time; either space and time are 'in us', or they are in the world in and of itself. Proceeding with the presupposition of this dualism, Kant considers space and time being transcendentally real, and rejects the proposition, because if it were true we could not have *a priori* knowledge of space, which we *do* in fact possess. Through elimination, therefore, space must be 'in us'. The problem, Trendelenburg argued, was that Kant never considered that space and time may be both in us as subjective representations *and* in things in and of themselves. "Either space is objective as a real thing or as a property of a real thing, or else it attaches only to the subjective character of our mind: The third possibility, that it is *both* subjective *and* belongs to things is not considered" (Trendelenburg quoted in Bird, 2006, p. 173). Fischer responded to Trendelenburg by appealing to the objective reality of space and time in the empirical realm. He claimed that, *pace* Trendelenburg, space and time *are* indeed objective, but that objectivity should be understood within the empirical realm. It is only from an unattainable and unknowable perspective that space and time are subjective. Trendelenburg rejected the argument as it does not address the issue at stake because empirical reality still "operates *within* the

³³ According to Dai Heide, Pistorius' formulation of the neglected alternative focused on showing the compatibility between Kant's position and a Leibnizian conception of space and therefore differed from the neglected alternative as it is usually understood. See Heide, D. 'The Neglected Neglected Alternative'.

scope of transcendental ideality” meaning that space and time are still subjective (Bird, 2006, p. 174). Trendelenburg seems to be correct in one sense; claiming that space and time are empirically real (objective), is not to show that Kant addressed the neglected alternative. Indeed, some may say that it does not even address the issue at stake. Saying that space and time are objectively valid, if considered empirically, is not the same as accounting for why space and time cannot be both in the mind *and* in the object in and of itself. Kant’s argument thus far has only established that our *derivation* of the representations of space and time are made from ‘within’; it has not thereby excluded space and time from coincidentally also being part of things-in-themselves.

Trendelenburg does, however, seem to be mistaken in one respect, and this is that he takes Kant’s result as indicating a return to classic idealism and skepticism, whereby appearance is equivalent to illusion. Now if Trendelenburg means by this, which it seems he does, that space and time are in some sense illusory, then Fischer is indeed right. Yet Trendelenburg is now overlooking a much stronger version which his own argument could be implying, namely that space and time are both subjective determinations (not illusions) *and* that they belong to things-in-themselves. Trendelenburg could circumvent the whole issue of transcendental versus empirical reality by granting Kant this distinction. He could then argue that despite this, Kant has not ruled out the possibility of space and time pertaining to things-in-themselves. If the neglected alternative is between space being both subjective *a priori* *and* having objective validity, then Fischer is correct, for nothing in Kant’s theory rules out the compatibility of the former with the latter. Bird, in siding with Fischer over Trendelenburg, expresses the issue in the following way: “For Kant the inference from ‘transcendentally subjective (ideal)’ to ‘not transcendentally objective (real)’ is accepted, but the inference from ‘transcendentally subjective (ideal)’ to ‘not empirically objective (real)’ is rejected” (Bird, 2006, p. 176). But, the obvious problem with this formulation is that the stronger version of the neglected alternative is not intending an inference of the (clearly fallacious) second kind, but is rather questioning the first inference which, by Bird’s

admission, Kant regards as valid. The stronger version of the neglected alternative questions whether the status of something as transcendently ideal necessarily excludes it from also being transcendently real. Bird continues to claim that Kant “recognized and accepted that they [space and time] may be both transcendently subjective and empirically objective; he recognized but denied that they are both transcendently subjective and transcendently objective” (Ibid.). Thus, according to Bird, Kant did exclude the stronger version of the neglected alternative but Bird provides no argument for this conclusion. Again, in his conclusion, Bird states that “What the advocates of the neglected alternative overlooked, or misrepresented, was that Kant allows an empirical as well as a transcendental level. Space and time are empirically real, not empirical ideas, and that reality is genuine compared with a spurious reality of the supersensible world” (Bird, 2006, p. 188); a formulation which only addresses the weaker version of the argument. The closest Bird seems to get to addressing the stronger version is when he claims that “Nor for Kant can they [space and time] be legitimately ascribed by us to the nonsensory world of things in themselves” (Ibid.). But, as should be evident by now, even this does not actually address the right issue. The stronger version of the neglected alternative does not claim that we can ascribe spatio-temporality to the realm of things in themselves; it rather questions how we can definitively exclude space and time from that realm.

3.2. Kant's Ontological Denial

If we turn to Kant's general remarks in the *Aesthetic*, however, we find that Kant himself has specifically dealt with the stronger version of the neglected alternative. Despite Fischer's arguments for the objectivity of space and time from an empirical perspective, which seem to miss the mark, Kant himself addresses the possibility of space and time being both subjective *a priori* forms *and* belonging to things-in-themselves, and concludes that the two are incompatible. How exactly Kant arrives at this conclusion has been the subject of dispute amongst scholars.

Some commentators, such as Henry Allison, argue that Kant moves from the claim that space and time are subjective representations to the conclusion that they are therefore not properties of things in themselves (Allison, 2004, pp. 116-8). Allison believes that the fact of the subjective status of space grounds Kant's ontological denial. Paul Guyer, on the other hand, argues that the reason *why* space and time are merely subjective is precisely because they cannot be part of things-in-themselves (*Ibid.*); thus he sees the ontological denial as the ground for the mere subjective status of space and time. To see which interpretation is closer to Kant's intentions it is important to consider the functions and objectives of the two expositions. We should note that the metaphysical exposition only established that space is an *a priori* form of intuition. It established that our representation of space is not derived from experience. It did so by demonstrating that the representation of space is a necessary one. Having previously established that whatever is derived *a posteriori* can only tell us about the way things are and not about how they *must* be, Kant was able to conclude that our representation of space is derived not from experience, but *a priori* from within. However, at this point, the work of the metaphysical exposition is done and all this exposition has been able to establish is that the representations of space and time are derived *a priori*. The metaphysical exposition only establishes an epistemological claim regarding our knowledge of space and time. It has not

ruled out the possibility that reality, in and of itself and independently of our cognition, is spatio-temporal as well. In our earlier account of the transcendental exposition, the exposition was presented as attempting yet again to secure the subjective status of space and time. Although it does perform this function, implicit in the arguments we outlined was the greater function of the transcendental exposition, namely, that of arguing for the *merely* subjective status of space and time (Kant's ontological denial). But how can Kant move from the conclusion of the metaphysical exposition to that of the transcendental one; how can Kant move from the claim that space and time are *a priori* conditions for cognition to the claim that they are not part of things in themselves, and therefore *merely* subjective? How can Kant move from an analysis of cognition to an analysis of being as abstracted from cognition?

The answer to this, for Kant, is that there is a specific incompatibility between our possession of an *a priori* truth and its (transcendental) objective validity, meaning that our very possession of an *a priori* truth *about* space and time, excludes space and time from being properties of things-in-themselves. It is from this claim that Kant will deduce the further inference that space and time are *merely* subjective representations. Thus, Kant's argument is not that space and time are subjective representations and can therefore not be part of things in themselves. He instead argues that the fact of our possession of certain *a priori* truths about space and time in geometry and kinematics, is incompatible with spatio-temporality pertaining to things in themselves. We can see how in this sense Guyer's reading is more in line with Kant's thought than Allison's. Guyer is correct in pointing out that Kant does not believe that space and time being transcendently subjective excludes them from also being transcendently objective; that is, Kant does not believe that the metaphysical exposition establishes his ontological denial. Rather, it is the transcendental exposition which allows Kant to draw an ontological conclusion, whereas the metaphysical exposition is restricted to epistemology.

We are still to consider the incompatibility between our possession of *a priori* knowledge about space, and space being transcendentally real. To see what Kant has in mind, let us assume that space is both an *a priori* subjective form of intuition *and* that it pertains to the nature of the world in and of itself. But regardless of whether space is transcendentally real or not, our intuition of space is not derived empirically; this was established in the metaphysical exposition. Thus, regardless of whether space pertains to things-in-themselves or not, our representation of space is not derived from experience. Regarding geometry, we know that its truths are necessarily true of spatial relations. Their necessary truth is implied in the fact that we do not need experience to verify its claims.³⁴ Now, if space were in fact a property of things-in-themselves, then the propositions of geometry would not only also be true of things-in-themselves, but they would be *necessarily* true of things-in-themselves. This is precisely what Kant seems to preclude, namely that we can have *a priori* (i.e. necessary) knowledge of something that is wholly extraneous to us. This is what Kant means when he says that “no determinations, whether absolute or relative, can be intuited prior to the existence of the things to which they belong, and none, therefore, can be intuited *a priori*” (A26/B42). As he puts it in the General Remarks, where he is considering how it is that we can come to know that a figure is possible with three straight lines, he asks us: “if the object (the triangle) were something in itself without relation to your subject: then how could you say that what necessarily lies in your subjective conditions for constructing a triangle must also necessarily pertain to the triangle itself” (A48/B66). The fact that, through geometry, we possess *a priori* knowledge of spatial relations implies, Kant believes, that space cannot also be a property of things-in-themselves. For if it were, then we would be left in the absurd position of being able to lay claim to truths about things which are wholly extraneous to us, without having had any experience of them; that is, we could lay claim to necessary truths about the world which hold regardless of our cognitive constitution, without having had any experience of the

³⁴ A46/B64

world – an absurd conclusion. If space were a property of things-in-themselves as well as a condition of cognition for us, the truth of geometrical claims about space would be true by virtue of how reality is in itself and quite independently of our form of sensibility. On such an account, the reason why a geometrical claim (such as two straight lines can never enclose a space) would be true would be because space, as a matter of fact and for reasons that are wholly independent of our cognition, is thus constituted that it cannot be enclosed by two straight lines. But if this fact is true of space in and of itself, that is as something that pertains to the nature of the world abstracted from us, then how, Kant asks, can we know this truth about space to necessarily be true, when knowing ‘necessarily’, by definition, implies knowing without experience (*a priori*)? To re-phrase the question, if this fact is true of space in and of itself, how can we know this fact about space *a priori*, without any experience of the world? The problem seems to be that if space were a property of things in and of themselves, any knowledge *about* space would have to come through *experience of spatial objects*, i.e. *a posteriori*. But, no *a posteriori* knowledge can ever be knowledge of necessity but merely knowledge of ‘matters of fact’, knowledge of things that are contingently true. If we can therefore establish that we have knowledge *about* space that is *a priori*, as Kant believes we do in geometrical propositions, then space must not only be a subjective condition of experience, but it must be *nothing more* than such a condition. As Kant phrases this conclusion, “If, therefore, space (and time as well) were not a *mere* form of your intuition that contains *a priori* conditions under which alone things could be outer objects for you, [...] then you could make out absolutely nothing synthetic and *a priori* about outer objects. It is therefore *indubitably certain* and *not merely possible* or *even probable* that space and time, as the necessary conditions of all (outer and inner) experience, are *merely* subjective conditions of all our intuition” (A48/B66, my emphases). The first statement highlights the incompatibility of our possession of synthetic *a priori* truths about space in geometry with space being part of the constitution of the world in and of itself. The second sentence makes explicit that the full force of Kant’s doctrine of

transcendental idealism, is not some form of agnosticism regarding whether space is a property of things-in-themselves as well as being a condition of experience. It unequivocally addresses and excludes the neglected alternative.

3.3. Objections to Kant's Ontological Denial

We will now turn to consider two objections to Kant's argument from geometry which support the possibility of Trendelenburg's neglected alternative.

Kant's argument for the ontological denial of spatio-temporality hinges on our ability to know certain things about space and time with apodictic certainty, which implies without recourse to experience. In the case of space, according to Kant, we possess these apodictic truths through geometry. What Kant's transcendental exposition makes clear, is that the strength of Kant's ontological denial depends on our possession of these *a priori* truths about space. The question facing us now is: In what sense, if at all, are the truths of geometry *a priori*/necessary? If it can be proven that the claims about space which we can derive from within ourselves, when tested empirically, do not give an accurate account of, or misrepresent, space in some fundamental respects, a potentially devastating blow will have been dealt to Kant's argument for ontological denial. Strawson considers precisely such a charge against Kant which he labels the "positivist view" (Strawson, 1966, p. 278). On this account, the problem with which Kant concerns himself, namely that of explaining the possibility of geometrical propositions being synthetic and yet necessary (*a priori*) at the same time, is not, in fact, a real problem. The propositions of geometry, insofar as they are necessary, are deduced logically from a previous set of axioms. The truth of these axioms, however, is not a necessary or *a priori* matter but rather something which must be tested and verified empirically (Strawson, 1966, pp. 278-9). The trouble for Kant is that the truths of geometry that he considers are based on Euclidian geometry, whilst

developments in geometry since the time of Kant, have shown that the best description of physical space is provided by non-Euclidian geometries. On the 'positivist view' therefore, Kant's argument from geometry fails in that the very truths which are supposed to be deducible merely *a priori* and yet be true of physical space, namely, Euclidian geometrical propositions, are not in fact strictly speaking true of physical space; thus not only are the claims false but their verification must come empirically or *a posteriori*.

We may wish to consider whether Kant's argument is immune from total collapse on the mere basis that he got the type of geometry wrong. Does Kant's argument for his ontological denial rest wholly on the truth of Euclidian geometry? We may grant Kant that despite his use of, and reliance on, Euclidian geometry, his argument is not wholly dependent on its truth. The trouble for Kant is not so much that he set out to rely on Euclidian geometry, as it is his belief that whatever kind of geometry we can imagine must necessarily hold of physical space. Strawson, in giving an uncharacteristically charitable account of Kant's argument, tries to see whether there is something in Kant's argument from geometry worth preserving. Strawson's strategy for this seems to be to separate physical geometry from what he calls 'phenomenal geometry' (Strawson, 1966, p. 282). Phenomenal geometry is the geometry not of physical objects but of spatial objects. What Strawson is drawing attention to is the geometry of shapes which we may consider in imagination. When, for example, I consider a triangle in imagination I am not, of course, considering a physical triangle but rather the look itself which physical triangles exhibit (*ibid.*). The representation of the 'looks' of physical objects is what Strawson means by 'phenomenal geometry'.³⁵ On Strawson's reading, then, Kant is correct insofar as whatever we may conceive as being impossible of space in imagination, e.g. that two straight lines enclose a space, must also hold for whatever spatial figures which we may encounter in

³⁵ We should note, as Strawson does, that the word 'phenomenal' is not being used by Strawson in the same way that it is by Kant. Strawson's classification of phenomenal and physical geometry is one which deals in both instances with phenomenal reality in Kant's terminology. Strawson seems to call his notion 'phenomenal' because it refers to the structures of physical space which we can represent to ourselves in consciousness.

perceptual experience. Thus, it may be the case that in astrophysics, for particularly large distances, we must assume the abandonment of certain propositions of Euclidian geometry, or the way in which we intuitively represent space, in order to make sense of our findings. But this does not mean that we can ever represent a geometry which does not fit the description of our phenomenal geometry; even if we are forced to assume that under certain circumstances, the spatial relations to which our imagination is constrained, must be suspended.³⁶ Thus, there seems to be something left over for Kant, despite developments in geometry since his time. However, and as Strawson recognizes too, it certainly does not seem as if this revised account can provide Kant with the kind of argument which he demands of it – namely to justify the transcendental subjectivity of space (Strawson, 1966, p. 292). The problem for Kant, as should be clear, is that on this reading we have still not ruled out the possibility, or even the actuality, of a physical object not conforming to the determinations of space which we must represent, and it is this conclusion which Kant must be able to establish if he wants to secure the *mere* subjective status of space; that is Kant must be able to establish that physical geometry cannot be different in nature to phenomenal geometry – and this is precisely what he cannot establish.³⁷

Besides the problems which Kant encounters in his argument from geometry, there seems to be another fundamental problem to which Kant's argument is vulnerable even if the truth of geometrical propositions were knowable *a priori*. When arguing for the impossibility of that which is true of necessity of our *a priori* representations to be necessarily true of things-in-themselves, Kant asks us that if the spatial properties, or the truths of geometry, pertained to things in themselves as well as being conditions of experience for us, then "how could you know that what necessarily exists in you as

³⁶ Allais closes Ch.10 of her forthcoming book *The Reality of Appearances* with a brief consideration of a very similar argument. See (Allais, Forthcoming, p. 227)

³⁷ For Strawson's full account of Kant's geometry including a more detailed treatment of the potential objections and qualifications of his argument, please see (Strawson, 1966, pp. 277-292).

subjective conditions for the construction of the triangle must of necessity belong to the triangle itself?" (A48/B65). But, Kant's formulation of this problem seems to rest on a conflation of truth and knowledge. For, even if it were the case that spatiality pertained to things as they are in themselves, though this would be a truth, it could never constitute knowledge. That is, even if space were a property of the world as abstracted from our form of sensibility, we would still never be in a position to, as Kant assumes, "*know* that what necessarily exists in you as subjective conditions for the construction of the triangle must of necessity belong to the triangle itself" (Ibid, my emphasis). Thus, the incompatibility which Kant highlights, namely that if spatiality pertained to things-in-themselves, our *a priori* knowledge of geometry would imply us possessing *a priori* knowledge of something that is wholly independent of us, only seems applicable regarding our inability to attain *knowledge* of things in themselves, not that something which is true for us cannot just so happen to likewise be true of the world in and of itself. If space were a property of the world in and of itself, our subjective and necessary knowledge of geometry would only be knowledge within the phenomenal realm; beyond this it would merely be a truth forever in need of a justification which we could never attain – and thus it would always remain outside the purview of knowledge.³⁸

We should, however, note that although Kant may have failed to secure his ontological denial, he has still established the epistemological claim that our representation of space is an *a priori* one, meaning that space and time are necessary epistemic conditions for subjects with our form of cognition. We should further note that the transcendental reality of space and time has not been proven by Trendelenburg; it has rather failed to be disproven. The neglected alternative remains cogent, but only as a mere possibility. No arguments have been provided to the effect that space and time *are* transcendently real,

³⁸ In the next chapter we will consider Kant's own arguments as to why no synthetic judgments about things-in-themselves can ever be justified. Kant's own argument focuses on the impossibility of securing a justification for why the predicate should be united with the subject of the judgment. See Chapter 3: 1.

but rather, as the argument stands, we simply cannot know whether things-in-themselves possess spatio-temporality or not. Interestingly enough, therefore, it would seem as if the ‘Neglected Alternative’ is, in some senses at least, a position which stays more committed to Kant’s Copernican Revolution, for unlike Kant’s ontological denial, the neglected alternative remains silent and agnostic regarding the ascription or denial of spatio-temporality to things-in-themselves. As Gardner points out “it may even be argued that the weaker version [of transcendental idealism] is the more consistently Critical, since it makes the veil of ignorance separating us from things-in-themselves – our agnosticism [about things-in-themselves] complete” (Gardner, 1999, p. 111).

4. One World vs. Two World Views

I now wish to turn to another issue which has generated a plethora of secondary material within Kant studies and concerns the relation between things-in-themselves and appearances. At certain points in the *Critique*, Kant presents the relation between things-in-themselves and appearances as that of two different perspectives of considering one and the same thing – what has come to be called the one-world view. In the Introduction to the *Critique*, for example, Kant says that we may consider objects “from two different sides, **on the one side** as objects of the senses and the understanding for experience, and **on the other side** as objects that are merely thought at most for isolated reason striving beyond the bounds of experience” (Bxvii-xix [n]). Likewise, in the *Aesthetic*, Kant claims that the “object as **appearance** is to be distinguished from itself as object **in itself**” (B69). What these passages seemingly highlight is that Kant thought that things-in-themselves and appearances are one and the same ontological object. The difference between the two is merely one of perspective and how they are considered by us. When we consider an object as that which is presented to us by the senses, and, therefore, as subject to the conditions of our cognitive faculties, we are considering the object as an appearance. If we now

proceed to think about this same object as it is abstracted from these relations to our cognition, we are considering the object as thing-in-itself (Wood, 2005, p. 65). As Kant explains: “If the senses represent to us something merely as it appears, this something must also in itself be a thing” (A249). Perhaps the most blatant assertion by Kant to the effect that things-in-themselves and appearances constitute one set of ontological objects is provided by the introduction where Kant claims that “we assume the distinction between things as appearance and *the very same things* as things in themselves, which our critique has made necessary” (Bxxvi-xxvii, my emphasis).

Against this interpretation, commentators have proposed another reading of what Kant took the relation between appearances and things-in-themselves to be, namely that they constitute two different sets of objects. The two-world view is not derived so much from any assertions by Kant that appearances and things-in-themselves must constitute two separate objects, as it is from Kant’s claims that things-in-themselves cause or ground appearances. Wood believes that the relation of ground and consequent is implied at A43/B60 where Kant says that “what objects may be in themselves would still never be known through the most enlightened cognition of their appearance, which alone is given to us” (A43/B60). He believes the position is also implicit in Kant’s assertion that “objects in themselves are not known to us at all, and that what we call outer objects are nothing other than mere representations of our sensibility, whose form is space, but whose true correlate, i.e. the thing in itself, is not and cannot be cognized through them” (A30/B45).³⁹ But perhaps Kant’s most emphatic claim which may be taken to indicate that he views the relation between things-in-themselves and appearances as that between a ground and consequent is provided us at A19/B33 in the *Aesthetic* where Kant explains to us how sensibility, one of the two faculties required for cognition, is what we may call a ‘receptive’ faculty whose content is given to it from without. In sensibility, Kant believes, objects “[affect] the mind in certain ways” (A19/B33). The first question then is: what does Kant

³⁹ See (Wood, 2005, p. 64)

mean by object at this stage? Given that the *Aesthetic* is the beginning of Kant's account of how we come to have experience of empirical objects (appearances), that which affects sensibility at this stage cannot itself be empirical (i.e. an appearance). The *Aesthetic* provides us with an account of one component of knowledge, namely intuitions, and it furthermore details certain specific forms to which our intuitions must conform. The objects which we are left with at the end of the *Aesthetic*, which – as the *Aesthetic* takes itself to have demonstrated – must be spatio-temporal, we may label appearances. This implies that those objects which provide us with the content or matter for appearances (remembering that an appearance is a combination of content and form) cannot themselves be appearances. If they are not appearances, then these objects must be things-in-themselves. Kant re-iterates the point later, this time in the *Analytic*, that “all intuitions, as sensible, rest on affections” (A68/B93). The very notion of affection implies the relation of that between a ground and consequent; here Kant's argument would suggest that things-in-themselves act as the grounds for our appearances by providing sensibility with the content which sensibility requires in order for us to have experience of an object or appearance. Thus, things-in-themselves, are essentially viewed as the causes of appearances.⁴⁰ Some commentators argue that if Kant does indeed take the relation between things-in-themselves and appearances to be a causal one, then he must be committed to the view that these two constitute two different sets of objects. The reasoning for this stems from the relation between any cause and its effect, whereby it is claimed that “no entity stands to *itself* in the relation of cause and effect” (Wood, 2005, p. 67). What is essentially being argued here, is that no entity can be both cause and effect of itself. Thus, if Kant is committed to the idea of things-in-themselves as grounds of appearances, he cannot, it is argued, hold fast to the claim that the difference between

⁴⁰ This reading is slightly different from that of Bird. Bird does not believe that at B33 Kant is referring to things-in-themselves, but rather to appearances (see Bird, 2006, p. 123).

things-in-themselves and appearances is merely one of two different conceptions of the same thing.

As we have seen, there is enough textual evidence to suggest that Kant was committed to both positions. In fact, Wood cites a passage where Kant seems to hold both positions simultaneously:

“There are things given to us as objects of our senses existing outside us, yet we know nothing of them as they may be in themselves, but are acquainted only with their appearances, that is, with the representations that they produce in us because they affect our senses. Accordingly, I by all means avow that there are bodies outside us, that is, things which, though completely unknown to us as to what they may be in themselves, we know through the representations which their influence on our sensibility provides for us, and to which we give the name of body – which word therefore merely signifies the appearances of this object that is unknown to us but is nonetheless real” (P 4:289)⁴¹

The first part of the passage explicitly claims a causal relation between things-in-themselves and appearances whereas the last sentence suggests that what we call bodies are the appearances of the very same things which are unknown to us, namely the things-in-themselves. The passage, though clearly stating Kant’s intentions, seems puzzling in that it seems to maintain a contradictory position. How can things-in-themselves be the grounds, and therefore causes, of appearances, and yet for them to constitute one realm of objects? Wood believes that there is no way out of the dilemma and that Kant must abandon one of the positions in order to be consistent (Wood, 2005, p. 66). However, other commentators argue that Kant is indeed justified in maintaining both positions, and that, in fact, the one-world view is compatible with the claim regarding affectivity. Let us attempt to see in what way Kant’s position may be justified.

⁴¹ See Wood, 2005, p.67, for a slightly different translation.

We know that our object of knowledge/experience is an appearance.⁴² We are furthermore led to stipulate that this appearance must also possess a constitution independently of how it appears to us; namely, its constitution as it is in itself, or its constitution as thing-in-itself. Moreover, the reason why we have the representation of an appearance, that is, the reason why we experience a phenomenal object, is because the object, as it is in itself (thing-in-itself) has the ability to affect us, and we have the appropriate disposition to *be affected by* it. However, we cannot know the thing as it is in itself, and when it affects our sensibility, it presents itself in the only form that it can ever present itself to us, namely as a spatio-temporal appearance. But, the appearance and the thing-in-itself are still the same *ontological* object with the difference that the appearance is our epistemological object; meaning that our object of experience is the affection of this object as it is in itself combined with our *a priori* determinations.⁴³ Thus, our appearance being the result of the thing-in-itself's affection highlights that there is a causal relation, or at least one of necessary grounding, between the two. The key to understanding where the confusion stems from in the incompatibilist position is the different uses of the term 'object' in the one-world and two-world views. When it is claimed, according to the one-world view, that an appearance and the thing-in-itself constitute one and the same object, the term 'object' is being used to refer to an ontological object. Our appearance may be qualitatively different from the thing-in-itself (or from itself as it is in itself), but this does not mean that the appearance is a different ontological entity than the thing-in-itself. The belief that an object cannot be the cause of itself is only true in the sense that our appearance (as appearance) cannot be the cause of itself as appearance. But, the causal relation between the thing-in-itself and its appearance is the relation by which something grounds the possibility of its own manifestation in a new light. If we know that the thing-in-

⁴² Although appearances are at this stage non-conceptual and therefore, strictly speaking not the objects of our experience, what we are focusing on is their spatio-temporality which pertains to both non-conceptualised appearances and fully conceptualised ones.

⁴³ Arthur Collins makes the same point when he says that "the concept of the 'thing-in-itself' and of contrasting appearances is never presented as an ontological distinction by Kant" (Collins, 1999, p. 58).

itself is our appearance when abstracted from sensibility, then it should be clear how, and why, the thing-itself must be the same ontological entity as its appearance and yet for the relation between them to be that of ground and consequent. For how else could we account for our appearance? What could ground the thing-in-itself being presented in a different way other than the thing-in-itself (combined with the subject's *a priori* determinations)? Certainly, we could not say that some *other* ontological entity is that which grounds our appearance, if this is merely the thing-in-itself manifested in a certain way.

Thus, we see that there is a case to be made for Kant's position that the relation between things-in-themselves and appearances is one of ground and consequent and yet also that they constitute one and the same object. In fact, we can see that the very fact that an appearance is a thing-in-itself with the forms of our sensibility is precisely *why* things-in-themselves must ground appearances. The belief that an object cannot be the cause of itself is only true in the sense that an appearance cannot ground itself as an appearance.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ The issue of the one-world vs. two-world debate has spurred a large body of literature, and I have only considered one aspect of this debate. Although many commentators nowadays tend to favour a one-world reading, other prominent contemporary Kant scholars such as Jay Van Cleve and Paul Guyer continue to argue for a two-world view. A notable one-world proponent is Henry Allison who tackles Van Cleve's argument in favour of a two-world view, in 'Kant's Transcendental Idealism'. Van Cleve's argument in favour of a two-world interpretation seems to turn on the alleged contradiction implicit in the one-world reading of having to claim that something both is and is not spatial. More recently Arthur Collins and Lucy Allais have both written in favour of a one world-reading. Ultimately, for our purposes, it is not so important which reading is more tenable than the other, and I have not presented this section as giving a determinate answer to the debate in favour of a one-world reading. I have merely focused on one aspect of the issue and attempted to show why I believe that the charge of objects being *causa sui* is not a valid one against one-world views. But the debate surrounding one-world vs. two-world interpretations covers a far wider range of issues and penetrates these far deeper than our analysis has allowed for. But a comprehensive account of the debate is completely beyond the bounds and aims of this chapter. I merely wish to bring attention to an on-going debate in Kant studies and to flag-up the two different strands of interpretation prominent amongst Kant scholars.

Conclusion

This chapter brings to a conclusion our exegesis of Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism and his account of sensibility as found in the Transcendental Aesthetic. What I wish to have demonstrated is the full import of Kant's Transcendental Idealism – namely, that space and time are *mere* subjective forms of intuition. Moreover, I demonstrated Kant's rationale behind his ontological denial along with reasons for why his ontological denial is ultimately an unjustified position. Our analysis of Kant's claims along with the neglected alternative will allow us a deeper appreciation of Nietzsche's early epistemological position, as we will see in Chapter 6.

Lastly, I attempted to reconcile the one-world and two-world interpretations on the issue of causality between things-in-themselves and appearances. My intended aim here was to demonstrate that, whatever reasons which exist for a two-world reading, Kant's derivation of things-in-themselves as the grounds of phenomena does not undermine his claim that things-in-themselves and appearances constitute one set of ontological objects. This conclusion will be of particular importance when, in Part Two, we turn to consider Schopenhauer's criticism of, and deviation from, Kant's philosophy.

CHAPTER 3: The Transcendental Analytic

Introduction

The *Aesthetic* attempted to establish the sensible conditions of experience, namely, that our representations of space and time are merely subjective conditions of knowledge which do not pertain to things-in-themselves. The success of the *Aesthetic* was, however, more modest and all that could securely be established was that spatio-temporality is a subjective condition of cognition. Whether space and time are properties of things-in-themselves remained unclear. More importantly we found that this agnostic conclusion was, in some senses, more in agreement with Kant's more general stance on the unknowability of things-in-themselves.

In this chapter I wish to consider Kant's account of the role of (pure) concepts in experience. To this end, I will focus on the Transcendental Deduction of the categories in

order to demonstrate Kant's claim regarding the discursivity of cognition – that is, the claim that all experience must be conceptual. The commitment by Kant to the discursivity thesis is of importance for our study in that both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche take up a position on this issue; Schopenhauer argues against this claim whereas Nietzsche, though at times ambivalent, seems, at least in his early period, to subscribe to the Kantian thesis. Thus, it is important for us to consider Kant's arguments of the Transcendental Deduction to see why he believes that conceptual experience is necessary both for experience of an objective world and for experience of a unified self. This will leave us in a position to evaluate Schopenhauer and Nietzsche's positions on these issues.

In the last two sections of the chapter I will turn to consider, firstly, Kant's restriction of the categories to the phenomenal realm; i.e. the claim that the categories cannot be used for cognition of objects beyond the realm of possible experience (or abstracted from sensible content). This conclusion, as we will see, is one which although Schopenhauer agrees with, he also views as contradicting Kant's inference to the thing-in-itself – a topic for Chapter 4. Secondly, I will consider the difference between the concept of a thing-in-itself and that of a noumenon. This distinction will bring to light a further distinction between sensible/receptive intuition vs. intellectual/original intuition, and will reveal Kant's commitment to our intuitions being of the former type. What we will find in both Schopenhauer's attempt to overcome the concept of the thing-in-itself as the ground of appearances (Chapter 4) and Nietzsche's attempts at rejecting the concept as incoherent (Chapter 9), is that insofar as they both subscribe to the receptivity thesis, they both, ultimately, fail to give an account of objective experience which does not, in some sense, presuppose the ability to make use of the concept of the thing-in-itself.

1. Setting the Stage for the *Analytic*

So far, our account of Kant's theory of experience has merely focused on one component of cognition, namely sensibility and its representations (intuitions). Sensibility is, as mentioned, a receptive faculty which can only yield intuitions insofar as things are *given* to it, or insofar as something affects us. But, in addition to sensibility, cognition also requires a "faculty for cognizing an object" (A50/B74); that is, a faculty for uniting intuitions under concepts, for although an object is *given*⁴⁵ to us through sensibility, we still require the understanding to be able to *think* these objects under concepts (A50/B75). What Kant is highlighting is that experience is not only conditioned and constrained by what can be given, but also by what can be thought. Now, whereas sensibility is receptive in nature, the understanding is spontaneous in that concepts are not given to it from without; they are rather *applied by* the understanding to the content which is provided to sensibility *a posteriori* under the *a priori* forms of space and time. The understanding is, thus, our self-governed faculty through which we can think that which is given to us through sensibility, as an object. However, although the two faculties are quite distinct, the receptivity of one and the spontaneity of the other highlight an important dependence of cognition on *both* of these faculties. In order for cognition to arise, we need both for intuitions be given to us through sensibility and for concepts to be applied by the understanding. As Kant famously put it: "Without sensibility no object would be given to us, and without understanding none would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" (A51/B75). Cognition requires both that our concept correspond to some object in the world, for otherwise it would merely be an empty thought, *and* that the content of an intuition be brought under concepts. We can think of and construct many concepts to which no object corresponds in the world. But until we are given the object in sensibility,

⁴⁵ The phrase that 'an object is given to us' in sensibility is slightly misleading, since what is, in fact, given, are intuitions; viz. the receptive component of an object. Schopenhauer, in fact, picks up on this point and we shall return to it in Chapter 4: 3.2.

we cannot say that our mere possession of the concept amounts to knowledge of the world. Thus, concepts require intuitions, or at least the possibility that something be met with in intuition, in order to yield knowledge. Likewise, if all we have are intuitions, without the ability to subsume these intuitions under concepts, we could never *think* our intuitions. Without such an ability we would merely be confronted with a chaos of sensation, not knowledge or experience proper. This bifurcation of requirements for cognition, insisted upon by Kant, was and continues to be a divisive issue in epistemology. As we will see in subsequent chapters, it was a point which already Schopenhauer contested and regarding which Nietzsche was highly ambivalent in his early epistemological writings.

2. The Analytic Proper

We saw in the *Aesthetic* that intuitions can be either pure (*a priori*) or empirical (*a posteriori*). An empirical intuition is that which is given to us in experience from outer objects through sensations, whereas a pure intuition is “the form under which something is intuited” (A50/B75) or the form which the empirical intuition must assume. Like intuitions, Kant believes that concepts can also be either empirical or pure. An empirical concept is one whose content is derived or acquired from experience, whose content is sensory, and whose application can only be justified through experience.⁴⁶ A pure concept, on the other hand, is “the form of thinking an object in general” (A51/B75), and just as pure intuitions are available to us *a priori*, so, Kant believes, are pure concepts as well.

⁴⁶ Kant defines an empirical concept as one which “‘springs from the senses through comparison of the objects of experience, and receives, through the understanding, merely the form of generality. The reality of these concepts rests on actual experience, from which they have been extracted as to their content’” (Kant quoted in Cassam, 2003, p. 87n).

Kant begins *The Transcendental Analytic* by considering the difference between a general and a specific mark of truth. He defines truth as “the agreement of cognition with its object” (A58/B83), but notes that a general yet *sufficient* mark of truth is impossible (A59/B83). The general mark of truth is that which belongs to *any* and *every* object. A true cognition, regardless of its content, must assume a certain form, meaning that whatever the specific content of a cognition, in order for it to be *true*, this content must first and foremost be in accordance with the general mark of truth – that is, in accordance with the form of an object in general. But the question of whether a judgment is true is also concerned with the *specific* content, and not merely the form which this content must assume. Thus, the general mark of truth does not suffice to give us true cognition “For although a cognition may be in complete accord with the logical form, i.e. not contradict itself, yet it can still always contradict the object” (A59/B84). What Kant means by this is that by establishing the criteria to which *any* object must conform, we may have given a necessary criterion of truth, but we cannot, based on this alone, expect to have ascertained the truth about the specific object under consideration. In the *Analytic*, Kant will concern himself not with the specific but with the general marks of truth. Thus, what we will be considering is the need for appearances (of intuitions), regardless of their specific content, to be unified according to certain determinations, or what Kant will call categories (pure concepts of the understanding). The categories, then, will constitute the necessary but not sufficient conditions of truth.

Kant then divides the deduction of the categories into a Metaphysical Deduction and a Transcendental Deduction. The Metaphysical Deduction is not, in fact, a deduction proper and, in the A-Edition, Kant refers to it as the ‘Clue’ to the deduction.⁴⁷ In the ‘Clue’

⁴⁷ What exactly Kant means by the term ‘Deduction’ has received its fair share of scholarly attention. A deduction, as suggested by its legal meaning, must deal with the question of right, and not with the question of fact. Thus, the transcendental deduction of the categories must establish not merely that the categories *do* have applicability (question of fact), but also why any sensory content must necessarily be brought under the categories (the question establishing our right to use the categories). It is on this basis that the metaphysical deduction does not constitute a deduction proper – for it merely identifies the pure concepts, but does not establish why these concepts must

Kant deals with general logic which assumes the existence of concepts which are then related to one another through the logical functions of judgment. Taken together, these exhaust the ways in which we may think of the relations between concepts – that is, they exhaust the ways we can think of and unite concepts. *Transcendental* logic, on the other hand (the topic of the ‘Deduction’ proper), is concerned with the way in which the manifold of intuition is “taken up, and combined in a certain way in order for a cognition to be made out of it” (A77/B102). Kant calls this action “synthesis” (Ibid.). Transcendental logic deals not with the way in which one concept is related to another concept – the task of general logic – but rather with how the different (non-conceptual) intuitions come to be synthesised or united together according to pure concepts. Kant’s contention is that the same functions through which concepts are united in a judgment in general logic are also the functions through which different non-conceptual intuitive representations are united in a manifold. As Kant says: “The same function that gives unity to the different representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition, which expressed generally, is called the pure concept of the understanding” (A79/B105). Now, the forms according to which we impose unity amongst our representations in a judgment in general logic are what Kant calls the logical forms of thought, or the forms of judgment, for which he provides us with a table.⁴⁸ His contention then is that the forms of judgment will also determine the general way in which our intuitions must be united or synthesised⁴⁹ regardless of their content – meaning that the general mark of truth is established through the way in which the forms of thought (the logical functions of judgment) synthesise appearances (intuitions).

necessarily apply to sensory content. For a detailed treatment of the meaning of the term ‘deduction’ in Kant’s work, see Henrich, 1989, pp. 29-46.

⁴⁸ See A70/B95

⁴⁹ Kant uses the terms ‘unification’, ‘combination’ and ‘synthesis’ interchangeably.

3. The B-Deduction

Kant's Deduction of the categories is not only notoriously complex and scattered (in that he struggles to present the Deduction systematically) but it also underwent significant revision between the A and B editions of the *Critique*; even in the period between the two editions Kant presented the Deduction differently in the *Prolegomena*. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to consider the nuances of the three versions, and thus following most commentators I shall focus on the B-edition Deduction which is arguably the clearest exposition which Kant provides.

Kant begins the B -Deduction by claiming that a manifold of representation is given to us through sensibility – which is to say passively. He then says that the *combination* of a manifold of intuition can never be given to us by mere receptivity, but must be an *act* by us; that is, although we can be given intuitions through sensibility, in order for us to combine our representations there must be an activity by the understanding.^{50 51} As Kant says, “we can represent nothing as combined in the object without having previously combined it ourselves” (B130). The important point for Kant is that *representing* a combination amongst our intuitions cannot be something we can read off the object or which can simply migrate into us. Yet, Kant's claim is not that the object cannot possess a combination in and of itself when it is given to us; it is rather the more forceful claim that even if the object did possess a combination, in order for us to *represent* this combination we would have to combine it ourselves. As Allison explains, “even if we suppose that the data are already given in an organized or unified fashion, the intellect must still represent to itself or think this ‘given’ unity” (Allison, 2004, p. 169).^{52 53} This thesis is extremely

⁵⁰ See Allison, 2004, p. 163.

⁵¹ As Kant says: “Yet the **combination** (*conjunctio*) of a manifold in general can never come to us through the senses” (B130).

⁵² In a letter to Beck Kant expresses this point as: “We must *compose* if we are to represent anything as *composed* (even space and time)” (Br 11: 515;482, quoted in Allison, 2004, p. 169).

important in Kant's Deduction and as we shall see much of what follows depends on this claim. Now, if we reflect on the idea of combination more, we see that it carries with it the concept of unity; for in order for us to combine different representations in a manifold of intuition, this combination must be made to give us *one* encompassing representation; that is, in combining intuitions we do so of a unified 'something', meaning that unity is essential to the concept of combination.^{54 55} Thus, what we must now look for is the ground of this unity – or the most minimal form in which intuitions may be united/combined/synthesised.

Kant starts the next section with the famous dictum that “The **I think** must **be able** to accompany all my representations; for otherwise something would be represented in me that could not be thought at all, which is as much as to say that the representation would either be impossible or else at least would be nothing for me” (B131-132). Now, this attachment of the ‘I think’ to my representations cannot be something receptive, or something that is *given* to me, but must rather be an act of spontaneity by the understanding. That is, the sensations that are given to me from without do not include the ‘mine-ness’ of these sensations – the mine-ness is something that is added *to* these representations by me. Kant calls this form of self-consciousness pure or original apperception (B132). Thus, in order for me to have experience of an object as a unity represented by my various sensations, of all of my representations (of appearances) I must at the very least *be able* to think that this representation is *mine*.⁵⁶ But, Kant continues, this

⁵³ Gardner makes a similar point when he says: “Even if the manifold were in itself ready-combined, there would still have to be an act of recognising its combination, which would amount to its re-combination” (Gardner, 1999, p. 128).

⁵⁴ See B130-131.

⁵⁵ Kant notes that the concept of unity mentioned here is not the pure concept (category) of unity which, like all categories, is “grounded on logical functions in judgments” (B131). In fact, all functions of judgment, and therefore all categories, presuppose the minimal conception of unity with which we are operating now.

⁵⁶ Note that Kant is not guilty of conflating self-consciousness with consciousness; that is, he is not denying that we may have experience of which we are not conscious as belonging to our selves. He is rather claiming that in order for the experience to have any cognitive significance for me (i.e. for it to constitute experience proper) I must be able to attach the ‘I think’. Moreover, the ‘I’ of original apperception is not our empirical self, but rather a transcendental self which is the condition of the possibility of there being an empirical self. Lastly, we should note that Kant is not even claiming that the ‘I think’ *must* accompany, but rather that it *must be able to* accompany my representations. For more on this see Allison, 2003, p. 164. Kant himself seems to draw this distinction at B132-133.

form of apperception is not enough for me to be able to represent the *identity* of the consciousness *between* different representations. We established that of each of my representations I must be able to posit the 'I think'. However, the mere ability to posit the 'I think' of each of my representations is not enough to ensure the ability to represent to myself the *same* 'I' on each occasion that I am confronted with a representation; that is, in order to have experience proper, I must not only be able to recognise a representation (R1) as mine, but upon experiencing R2 I must be able to recognise that R2 belongs *to the same* 'I' as did R1; I must represent the *identity* of the 'I' which is confronted with representations. Without this ability, Kant claims, "I would have as multicolored, diverse a self as I have representations of which I am conscious" (B134).

Now, the awareness of this identity must happen by "my adding one representation to the other and being conscious of their synthesis" (B133), meaning that the only way that I can represent the identity of the consciousness throughout all the different representations is if I can *combine* or *synthesise* these representations. It is for this reason that Kant claims that the "analytical unity of apperception is only possible under the presupposition of some synthetic [unity of apperception]" (B 133). The analytic unity of apperception is the unity which all my representations have insofar as I can become aware of them as belonging to *me*. The synthetic unity of apperception is the unity which my representations have through my being aware of their synthesis.⁵⁷ Now, the most minimal way in which I may synthesise or combine my representations is in terms of them each being mine (self-ascription). Thus, the synthetic unity of apperception, which refers to consciousness of the synthesis of R1 and R2, is (most minimally) consciousness that R1 and

⁵⁷ Much has been made regarding whether consciousness of synthesis refers to the 'act' or 'product' of synthesis. Although, according to Allison, Kant seems to have both in mind, consciousness of the 'product' of synthesis is a far more defensible claim. If this is Kant's position, he is claiming that in order to be conscious of the identity of the 'I' between representations A and B, I need to be conscious of A and B together (see Allison, 2004, p. 170). The question of consciousness of the *act* of synthesis is more controversial and divisive. Allison seems to believe that Kant both intended and was entitled to the claim, whereas Strawson is sceptical of any claim to the effect that we have some form of consciousness at the level of transcendental synthesis (See Strawson, 1966, p. 95). Strawson even labels Kant's talk about transcendental synthesis as belonging to "the imaginary subject of transcendental psychology" (Strawson, 1966, p. 32).

R2 are representations for the same 'I'. That is, before I can combine R1 and R2 in terms of any of their properties, I must first of all have combined them as representations which each belong to the same persisting 'I' (viz. me). Thus, what Kant means by claiming that the analytic unity of apperception is only possible under the presupposition of the synthetic unity of apperception is that I can only be conscious of the identity of the 'I' in my different representations if I can combine these representations and be aware of this combination. But this combination, most minimally, is combination in terms of each representation being mine, meaning that consciousness of the synthesis of my representations, really, means consciousness of R1 and R2 as making up the class of representations which 'belong to me'; i.e. in thinking the synthesis of R1 and R2, I am most minimally thinking of them as together belonging to the same consciousness. The thing to note here is the reciprocity between the analytic and synthetic unities of apperception. In thinking my representations as each belonging to the same 'I', I am thereby bringing them into a synthetic unity; or as Allison claims: "Indeed, I cannot ascribe them to my identical self without *in the very same act* also bringing them into synthetic unity" (Allison, 2004, p. 166), in the same way that I cannot effect a synthetic unity amongst my representations (combine them as each belonging to me) unless I can recognise the identity of the 'I' amongst my different representations.

Allison stresses this reciprocity thesis, but I believe he overlooks the consequences of the reciprocal relationship between the two unities of apperception. What we must determine is how we are to understand the reciprocity between the analytic and synthetic unities of apperception. First of all, we may agree that each unity of apperception necessarily depends on the other, by which we mean that each unity of apperception necessarily implies the other. But, if this is so, then this must imply that each cannot be the sufficient reason for being of the other, since each claim is implicit in the other. Kant, of course, explicitly states that the synthetic unity of apperception grounds the analytic unity

of apperception,⁵⁸ but this is precisely what I believe the mutually implying relation between the two unities precludes.

To understand these claims, let us take the example of a straightforward reciprocal statement, such as “All bachelors are ‘unmarried men’”⁵⁹. Now, we cannot take the *ground* for being a bachelor, that is, the *reason* why someone is a bachelor, to be that he is unmarried – because unmarried is simply (part of) the definition of being a bachelor, not its ground for being. Likewise, we cannot explain the ground of someone being unmarried by explaining that he is a bachelor. However, *it is true that whenever* a man is a bachelor, he is also unmarried, and vice versa. Thus, A can only imply B and B imply A – i.e. logical reciprocity only obtains – in a judgment where A and B are implicitly “contained” in each other. But, this means that nothing new is added in making something explicit in a reciprocally (symmetrically) analytic judgment.⁶⁰ If A implies B, and B implies A, there cannot be anything outside of the judgment which acts as the necessity with which A and B are related. What is required for something to be the *ground* of something else is that there is something which is *not* implicit within the definitions of the concepts in the judgment, or between the judgments, which acts as that which makes the judgment possible. This implies that if a judgment is a symmetrical analytic one, or if the *relation between two judgments* is a symmetrical analytic one, neither judgment can act as the ground for being of the other; that is, neither judgment makes the other one possible, but rather that whenever one is actual the other is necessary, and vice versa. To claim that A and B are mutually-implying and yet that A becomes possible through B, is equivalent to claiming that A becomes possible through itself, or that A is the ground for its own being. The reason for this is that if a symmetrically analytic relation holds between A and B, whenever we posit A we must also posit B, or what is the same, whenever A is the case so,

⁵⁸ “Synthetic unity of the manifold of intuition, as given *a priori*, is thus the *ground* of the identity of apperception itself, which precedes *a priori* all **my** determinate thinking” (B134).

⁵⁹ I am combining ‘unmarried men’ together to express one concept so that the proposition is a *reciprocal* analytic proposition. This would not have been the case had we chosen the proposition ‘All bachelors are unmarried’.

⁶⁰ Recall that Kant calls analytic judgments ‘judgments of clarification’ (B11 and Prolegomena sec. 1).

necessarily, is B, and vice versa. But this should suffice to demonstrate why A cannot become possible through B, because as soon as we posit B, *we must also* posit A. Thus, for B to be a moment in the ground for being of A would imply that A constitutes a moment in its own ground for being – which is equivalent to claiming that A is *causa sui*.

Bringing these points back to Kant's distinction between a synthetic and analytic unity of apperception we see that I cannot unite different representations as each being mine (effecting a synthetic unity) without being able to think the identity of the 'I' in each of the representations in respect of which I am able to posit the 'I think' (analytic unity). Likewise, I cannot think the identity of the 'I' in my different representations without uniting them as each being mine. Kant is then making explicit what is implicit in the act of thinking the identity of the 'I' in each of my representations. This means that Kant cannot say that one unity becomes possible *through* the other, but rather that whenever one is given, the other is always necessary – but as to how it is that *either* is possible, this cannot be explained through the other. It is not *because* of our ability to combine that we come to learn the identity of the 'I' (awareness of this identity is presupposed for combination to be possible). Likewise, it is not because we know of the identity of the 'I' in different representations that we can combine these representations (because being aware of the identity of the 'I' amongst my different representations *is* to combine representations). Rather, the two refer to one and the same act, and no priority can be given to either one, for if it were then the relation would lose its reciprocity. Thus, neither formulation, that is, neither the analytic nor synthetic unity of apperception is the '*why*' of the other. Rather, given that one is the case, then so must the other be (and vice versa). The '*why*' is essentially not answered by Kant but is simply that which must obtain for there to be experience.

After the reciprocity thesis, through which Kant believes to have explained how apperception is possible (something with which we have disagreed), he compares the synthetic unity of apperception to the forms of space and time; in the same way that

anything, insofar as it is given, must be spatio-temporal, likewise any things that are to be combined in one consciousness must first and foremost stand under the synthetic unity of apperception (B 136-7). Kant then gives us the definition of an object as “that in the concept of which the manifold of an intuition is united” (B137). Thus, in order to have an object we need to unite intuitions in a concept, and the way in which we unite representations *most minimally* must serve as the basis for *any* object – that is, an object in general, or what Kant will call a transcendental object (the general mark of truth). Now, we know that this most minimal form of unification is the synthetic unity of apperception – that is, combining my representations as all belonging to the same I. This means that the synthetic unity of apperception is what is required for us to effect *any* form of unity; it is the form of unification/synthesis most minimally, and therefore it is that which constitutes the relation of representations to objects – that is, it is the spontaneous form through which the understanding must cognise *any* object, regardless of what object it is. The synthetic unity of apperception is the “objective condition of all knowledge” (B 138), or to put it in the language of the start of the *Analytic*, it is the general, though not specific, mark of truth – the necessary though not sufficient.

In §20, Kant proceeds to link the unity of apperception to the forms of judgment. Though we will not consider this in detail, we will provide a brief overview of Kant’s argument. Kant claims at B143 that “The action of the understanding [...] through which the manifold of given representations (whether they be intuitions or concepts) is brought under an apperception in general, is the logical functions of judgment” (B143). His claim is that in transcendental logic, like general logic, the way in which the understanding can combine things (initially non-conceptual representations in transcendental logic whereas it is already conceptualised items in general logic) is always judgmental.⁶¹ Thus, in relation to

⁶¹ As Kant says in the ‘Clue’ to the Deduction: “The same function that gives unity to the different representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition, which expressed generally, is called the pure concept of the understanding” (A79/B105).

the synthetic unity of apperception, Kant claims that the only way in which I can be aware of the identity of my 'I' in each of the representations of which I can claim mineness, is if I unite these representations *judgmentally*, or if this self-ascription occurs judgmentally. Referring back to the 'Clue', Kant extends the conclusions of that section to the one under consideration, namely that the table of judgments constitute the forms of thought.⁶² This table, with some modifications, then makes up the table of categories⁶³ which exhausts the ways in which representations of appearances *must* be combined in order to become objects of experience, *regardless* of the object. Whereas the table of judgments at A70/B95 exhausts the ways in which *concepts* can be combined in general logic, the table of categories at A80/B106 exhausts the ways in which *intuitions* (or their appearances) can be combined in transcendental logic (B 143).⁶⁴

It should be noted that many question marks can be raised regarding Kant's success in establishing this conclusion, or more specifically regarding Kant's success in linking apperception to judgment; Kant's various attempts at this (both in the *Prolegomena* and the B-Deduction) seem to have tied apperception to a much too narrow conception of judgment, namely, judgment as empirically true judgment – undermining the whole project of the *Analytic* as being concerned with the *general*, not specific, marks of truth. There are further questions regarding what Kant is attempting to achieve in the 'beginning' to the 'Deduction' and in the 'sequel'⁶⁵, and what exactly Kant means by the terms objective

⁶² For table of judgments, see A70/B95.

⁶³ For table of categories, see A80/B106.

⁶⁴ As Kant says: "But now the *categories* are nothing other than these very functions for judging, insofar as the manifold of a given intuition is determined with regard to them" (B143).

⁶⁵ In the Deduction Kant first tries to establish that any appearances insofar as they are to become objects of experience must be unifiable according to the categories. But this left open the possibility that there are other appearances which are simply incapable of being combined categorially - a conclusion which in turn leaves open the possibility that the categories are not *imposed* onto experience, but rather that there is something about (some of) our appearances which allow for them to be categorially combined. In the second part of the Deduction Kant tries to extend his argument so that he argues that *any* appearances of which we are conscious *must be unifiable* according to the categories, allowing him to claim that we *impose* our categories onto experience. This reading, which finds some support from what Kant says at B144-145, is indebted to Allison's presentation of Dieter Henrich's reading of the Transcendental Deduction. Although Allison seems, on the whole, rather sympathetic to Henrich's interpretation, he disagrees over what he believes are Kant's intentions in the two different parts of the deduction. See Allison, 2004, pp. 161-2.

validity and objective reality. For length reasons, these issues will not be addressed in this chapter, though to be sure they are pressing issues of which a thorough analysis of the Deduction should be aware and consider. But for our purposes, what is important is Kant's belief in the necessity of uniting appearances in accordance with pure concepts in order to have experience of both objects and of a unified self. We found in both the Introduction to *CPR* and at the start of the *Analytic* the claim that in order to have cognition of objects we need both intuitions through which objects are given and concepts through which they are thought. But, until the 'Deduction', Kant had not offered any proof for why we need concepts in order to have objective experience. What he then proceeded to do in the 'Deduction' was to establish why certain pure concepts must govern the unification or combination of whatever appearances we have insofar as these appearances are to become objects of experience for us, and he furthermore linked this requirement to the requirements of self-consciousness. This is, I believe, what Kant is trying to bring attention to in his formulation of the mutually implying relation between the synthetic and analytic unities of apperception. What Kant attempts to demonstrate there is that assuming that combination of representations is a necessary activity in order for us to have cognition of an objective world, then the awareness of the identity of the 'I' between different representations is paramount for us to be able to effect any combination; which is to say that self-consciousness (albeit in a transcendental sense) is required for cognition of objects. But, likewise, Kant argues that the only way in which I can become aware of the identity of the 'I' between different representations (i.e. the only way that transcendental self-consciousness is possible) is through my being able to combine my different representations, through judgmental self-ascription. Thus, each is required for the other, and each is implied by the other. What Kant argues for, then, is not only that without concepts we cannot have experience of objects, but also that without these pure concepts we cannot even have proper self-consciousness; the requirements for self-consciousness turned out to be the same as the requirements to have experience of objects – namely, the

transcendental object, which constitutes the basic forms which govern *any* unification/combination of appearances.

4. Restriction of the Categories to Phenomena

One of the significant conclusions of the *Analytic*, which has a great bearing on Kant's critical philosophy as a whole, is the lesson drawn regarding the scope of the categories. The categories turn out to be the "source of all truth [...] in virtue of containing the ground of the possibility of experience" (A237). The categories, in being *a priori* conditions of cognition, are indiscriminate in that we can know, prior to experience of any sensible content, that the content must be synthesized, and therefore thought, in terms of these categories. This criterion for the truth of cognitions should make clear the scope of the application of the categories in yielding knowledge of the world. In order for a cognition to be true (or even possible), the content must be thought in terms of the categories. But in order for this to be the case, there must be some content to begin with; that is, the insistence that truth is 'content according to a certain form' highlights the importance of the presence of both form and content. This content, which, in order to become a cognition must be thought of as substance, cause, etc., can only be given to us in intuition. There are, as established in the *Aesthetic*, two types of intuitions: pure and empirical. Pure intuitions, however, do not suffice to provide us with the content for cognition, for these are merely the *forms of intuitions*. Furthermore, a pure, and therefore, *a priori*, intuition combined with an *a priori* form of thought could never provide us with *synthetic* knowledge, that is, knowledge of outer objects. Since the *a priority* of a cognition implies, for Kant, that its source is in the subject, we could never attain to knowledge of the world purely from *a priori* intuitions and concepts. Kant makes this point in §23 of the B-Deduction when he says that: "The pure concepts of the understanding, consequently, even if they are applied

to *a priori* intuitions (as in mathematics), provide cognition only insofar as these *a priori* intuitions, and by means of them also the concepts of the understanding, can be applied to empirical intuitions. Consequently the categories do not afford us cognition of things by means of intuition except through their possible application to **empirical intuition**, i.e., they serve only for the possibility of **empirical cognition**. The categories consequently have no other use for the cognition of things except insofar as these are taken as objects of possible experience” (B147-148). This means that the content which must be thought according to the categories must be provided us, or given to us, in empirical intuitions through sensibility. Thus, the categories fundamentally rely on empirical intuitions in order for them to yield knowledge. Moreover, we cannot even define the categories without appeal to experience (B300) because their real sense is how they are applied through the schemata. Kant even goes through several of the categories and shows how and why the concept necessarily depends on intuitive content in order for it to be capable of yielding cognition.⁶⁶ From this, he concludes that “the pure concepts of the understanding can **never** be of transcendental, but always only of **empirical** use, and that the principles of pure understanding can be related to objects of the senses only in relation to the general conditions of a possible experience, but never to things in general (without taking regard of the way in which we might intuit them)” (A246/B303). The categories, therefore, fundamentally rely on empirical intuitions in order to have any applicability; devoid of such empirical content they are rendered incapable of yielding cognition of the world.⁶⁷ Given this dependence of the categories on sensibility (specifically empirical intuitions), the categories can never be applied to give us cognition beyond the realm of possible

⁶⁶ E.g. Kant says about the category of quantity that “No one can define the concept of magnitude in general except by something like this: That it is the determination of a thing through which it can be thought how many units are posited in it. Only this how-many-times is grounded on successive repetition, thus on time *and the synthesis (of the homogenous) in it* (A242/B300, my emphasis).

⁶⁷ Kant makes a similar point in a note in his personal copy of the A-Edition of ‘On the ground of the distinction of all objects into phenomena and noumena’: “Until now one believed that through categories one actually already cognized something; now we see that they are only forms of thought for bringing the manifold of intuitions to synthetic unity of apperception” (A235^b)

experience – which is to say, to things as considered apart from our mode of sensibility (things-in-themselves).

At B314-5, Kant again considers and re-emphasises the error involved in attempting to use the categories to attain knowledge of the realm beyond possible experience. Here, Kant asks us to attempt to apply a category to any synthetic proposition about things-in-themselves. Let us take the proposition “Everything contingent exists as the effect of another thing, namely its cause” (B315). We know of synthetic propositions that the concepts therein “have no logical (analytical) affinity” (B315), meaning that the connection between the concepts in the judgment must be established either through experience or must lie *a priori* in the mind. In the case of things-in-themselves, the connection between subject and predicate cannot come from experience, since things-in-themselves are precisely the objects as abstracted from experience, that is, they are the things not as they are given to us through intuitions, but as they are in themselves. Since we cannot use experience to establish the link between subject and predicate (in our case between things-in-themselves and causality,) in order for the category of causality to have applicability to things-in-themselves we must be able to establish this connection completely *a priori*. But how could we know a property to pertain to a thing which is wholly other than us without recourse to experience, through mere introspection? To consider this in relation to the B-Deduction, what ensured that the categories had *a priori* applicability to objects was that they governed the synthesis of all intuitions (indiscriminately). But, when dealing with the concept of a thing as it is in itself, no such synthesis of intuitions is under question because we are dealing with objects as they are abstracted from how they are given to us in intuition. Thus, the applicability of the categories to things-in-themselves can neither be established *a priori*.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Regarding our inability to know anything of the world in and of itself *a priori*, Kant also says that the reason why we can know certain things about appearances *a priori* is because we can know what *form* our experience (in this case thought about objects) must take. As Kant claims, one of the important results of the Transcendental Analytic is that “the understanding can never accomplish a

5. Phenomena vs. Noumena

I now wish to turn attention to a distinction which Kant draws between a ‘phenomenon’ and a ‘noumenon’, and furthermore how the latter concept differs from that of a thing-in-itself. These distinctions will help clarify and bring to light another important distinction which Kant draws, namely, that between a sensible vs. intellectual/original intuition.

Phenomena, for Kant, are “beings of sense” (B306).⁶⁹ A phenomenon is essentially an appearance which is no longer undetermined, but whose intuitions have been synthesized in concepts. But, that Kant calls a phenomenon a being of sense indicates that what Kant sees as distinguishing phenomena is not mediation *per se*, but more specifically mediation by the senses. This makes sense in light of our previous discussion which made clear that the understanding cannot mediate by itself; it can only apply categories to content given to it through sensibility, which, according to the form of sensibility, is spatio-temporal, and therefore an appearance and already mediated. Thus, the mediation which makes an object a phenomenon has its source, originally, in sensibility. Kant then claims that the thought of phenomena, namely objects of sense, leaves us with the thought of objects as “beings of understanding” (B306) which Kant calls noumena. Gardner defines a noumenon as “an object *exclusively of the understanding*: an object given to a subject but only to its intellect or understanding, i.e. not given by sensibility” (Gardner, 1999, p. 200). A noumenon is, therefore, only a possible object for a subject whose cognitive constitution is fundamentally different from ours. We know that according to Kant, our mode of cognition requires, both, intuitions and concepts, sensibility and understanding, receptivity and spontaneity. The type of cognition that Kant has in mind, when speaking of a noumenon, is what he brings attention to towards the end of the *Aesthetic*.⁷⁰ In contrast to our form of

priori anything more than to *anticipate the form of a possible experience in general* (A246/B303, my emphasis).

⁶⁹ The word phenomenon derives from the Greek word ‘phainomenon’ meaning ‘thing appearing to view’, which is based on the word ‘phainein’ meaning ‘to show’ (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2005).

⁷⁰ See B68-B72

sensible intuition, we can imagine a being, such as God, whose intuition is not sensible or derived, but rather intellectual or original (B72). A subject with intellectual or original form of intuition would give itself objects simply by thinking them. The givenness of external objects would not be dependent on the subject being affected by outer things in any way, which always leaves the door open for mediation of the object through sensibility via the forms of intuition to which the object would have to conform. Rather, the “existence of the object of intuition is itself given” (B72) to the subject by himself, meaning that he gives *himself* objects for intuition. A noumenon is thus what an object for a subject with an intellectual intuition would be like. We are led to the thought of a noumenon through an analysis of our mode of cognition revealing that our cognitive structure is one whereby objects must first be given to us through sensibility and then thought via concepts through the understanding. This realisation leads to the consideration of objects as they may be for a subject who does not need objects to *affect* it in order to have objects given to it. In the B-edition Kant calls this the conception of “noumenon in the **positive** sense” (B307). Importantly then, when Kant says that a noumenon is an object of the intellect alone, he does not mean by this that we can come to know a noumenon through the application of the categories void of sensibility; this is, as mentioned earlier, impossible for us. A noumenon is rather what we could know *if* we could apply the categories void of sensibility, or what is the same, a noumenon is what an object would be like for a subject *who could* have objects without sensibility.

The concept of a noumenon must now be distinguished from that of a thing-in-itself. Things-in-themselves were defined in the *Aesthetic* as “things when they are considered in themselves through reason, i.e., without taking account of the constitution of our sensibility” (A28/B44). This formulation makes it seem as if the concept of a thing-in-itself and that of a noumenon mean the same thing. To be sure, there is certainly a similarity between the two concepts but there is a significant difference in the function that each concept has within Kant’s system. The concept of a thing-in-itself serves as an

ontological concept which denotes “the concept of an object as it is constituted in itself, without reference to our (or any other subject’s) knowledge of it” (Gardner, 1999, p. 200).⁷¹ When considering the concept of a thing-in-itself, we must abstract from our appearance everything which makes it an appearance for us – namely its property of spatio-temporality; or what is the same, we must consider the thing “**insofar as it is not an object of our sensible intuitions**” (B 307).⁷² The concept of a noumenon (in the positive sense), on the other hand, is an *epistemological* concept as it denotes the object of a certain mode of cognition, namely one with a non-sensible intuition. We should note that whereas with the concept of a thing-in-itself we were considering a thing apart from *any possible* subject’s cognition, the concept of a noumenon is an object for a *specific kind* of subject. In this way the two concepts serve two very different functions.

There is, however, another sense in which the two concepts are very similar, to the point where we can claim that a noumenon, insofar as it is an object for a subject with original intuition, would also be a thing-in-itself. A subject with intellectual intuition would produce its object simply by way of thinking it. His relation to his object would not be one whereby the object was an outer object (distinct from himself) which had to affect him in some way. But it should be clear that for such a subject, the object would no longer be mediated by certain subjective forms of sensibility, as is the case with our cognition of objects. The object for a subject with intellectual intuition would in itself contain the same relations, determinations, and properties as would the object as it is for the subject, because the object would only be in itself insofar as it is thought by the subject; thus the ‘in itself’ and the ‘for the subject’ would be one and the same. As Strawson explains the point: “Either there is no such thing as knowledge of the supersensibly real as it is in itself or the

⁷¹ In the B-edition of ‘Phenomena and Noumena’ Kant seems to equate noumenon in the *negative* sense with the concept of a thing-in-itself. “If by a noumenon we understand a thing **insofar as it is not an object of our sensible intuitions**, because we abstract from the manner of our intuition of it, then this is a noumenon in the **negative** sense” (B307)

⁷² This raises the issue of whether the thing-in-itself must also be thought of as void of categorial determinacy. Moreover, it raises the question of whether the categories can be used, without sensible content, to *think* objects. We will return to this issue in Chapter 9, when considering Nietzsche’s rejection of the concept of the thing-in-itself.

supersensibly real is created by that very awareness and does not exist independently of it. In so far as the supersensibly real is thought of as a possible object of such a non-sensible awareness (intellectual intuition), it is entitled 'noumenon'" (Strawson, 1966, p. 239). To know a noumenon, therefore, is to know a thing as it is in and of itself, *but* in order to know a noumenon one must possess an intellectual or original intuition. The upshot of all this is that we can never use our categories, which are merely rules for the synthesis of the sensory manifold in one consciousness, to attain knowledge of anything beyond the phenomenal realm.

Conclusion

I have attempted in this chapter to provide a critical reading of selected parts of the Transcendental Analytic of the CPR. My aim is to have demonstrated Kant's rationale for arguing for the discursivity of cognition, that is, the thesis that a spontaneous, judgmental, unification of sensory content is necessary for experience of both a unified self and of an objective world. I then considered Kant's restriction of the categories to the realm of appearances; that is, the reliance of the pure concepts on sensible intuition insofar as the former can provide us with knowledge of objects. Lastly, I set out the difference between the concept of a noumenon and that of a thing-in-itself to bring to light the distinction between two different forms of intellect.

This chapter also concludes Part One of our study, which has focused on key commitments made by Kant in the Aesthetic and Analytic of CPR which form cornerstones of his theory of cognition. I have, moreover, focused on selective topics within these areas to consider key commitments by Kant which are either picked up by Schopenhauer and Nietzsche as points of contention, or which are presupposed in one way or another in the latter's accounts, but which are nonetheless problematic for their epistemologies. In Parts Two, Three, and Four, we will turn to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche's accounts of cognition

of objects and, in the course of this, will revisit the issues introduced in Part One for further analysis.

PART TWO: SCHOPENHAUER

Introduction

In this second part of the study, I will address some of the issues which were raised in Part One, but which were nonetheless left unresolved. Part Two will look at certain criticisms of the Kantian philosophy made by Schopenhauer and how these led to a divergence in the philosophies of the two. Most importantly, however, this part will serve as a bridge between the account of transcendental idealism presented by Kant and the conclusions drawn from this doctrine by Nietzsche, especially in his early period. In the early notebook writings, Nietzsche sounds, in some respects, very much like a transcendental idealist. Yet when one considers the conclusions which Nietzsche draws from Kant's doctrine in relation to Kant's writings themselves, there is a fairly strong case to be made that much of what Nietzsche claims regarding truth, language, experience, etc. does not in fact follow from Kant's philosophy. Thus, traditionally, Nietzsche's epistemology, and particularly his error theory, has been read through a Schopenhauerian prism. Although I shall ultimately argue that Nietzsche's thoughts on metaphysics and epistemology from this period are Kantian in many respects and quite critical of Schopenhauer in others, a prior task is to provide an account of Schopenhauer's version of transcendental idealism. It is, finally, worth noting that although the issues which will be considered in this part are intricately bound up with Nietzsche's position on these matters, it is beyond the scope of Part Two to consider these issues *in relation to* Nietzsche's epistemology; that will be a task for Part Three. My goal, at this stage, is merely to highlight these differences between Schopenhauer and Kant and provide an assessment of the relative success or failure of Schopenhauer's position.

CHAPTER 4: Schopenhauer *contra* Kant

Introduction

In this chapter I wish to highlight some of the major points of difference between Kant and Schopenhauer's accounts of the origin of experience, which influenced the early Nietzsche's position on epistemology. Specifically, I will consider two issues which, though they will be – somewhat artificially – separated in this paper, are closely intertwined. The first issue to be considered is the criticism, first raised by F.H. Jacobi, regarding Kant's alleged illegitimate use of the category of causality. I will consider how Schopenhauer believes his account of experience to overcome this problem. This will require a treatment of Schopenhauer's own theory of cognition and experience, which will in turn reveal Schopenhauer's rejection of Kant's discursivity thesis. What we find in Schopenhauer is a

commitment to the possibility of non-conceptual experience; a claim which stands in stark contrast to Kant's position as argued for in the Transcendental Analytic. I will then turn, in the following chapter, to critically assessing Schopenhauer's arguments from a Kantian perspective.

1. Criticism of Causality

Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant's alleged misapplication of the category of causality focuses on the latter's derivation of the notion of things-in-themselves – a notion which, despite his criticism, Schopenhauer believes to be of great importance and for which, he believes, Kant deserves great praise. He writes, in the Appendix to WWR, entitled Critique of the Kantian Philosophy: "*Kant's greatest merit is to distinguish between appearance and thing-in-itself – by proving that the *intellect* always stands between us and things, which is why we cannot have cognition of things as they may be in themselves*" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 444). Schopenhauer lauds Kant's Copernican revolution in philosophy whereby it was no longer assumed that cognition of an object amounted to an as accurate as possible of a re-presentation of the object as it independently is. Kant's insight into the *a priori* determinations of our cognitive make-up in determining an object of experience transformed both the disciplines of epistemology and metaphysics and Schopenhauer's own philosophy takes much of what Kant established in *CPR* both as a starting point and for granted.

Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant, however, springs from what he sees as an erroneous derivation of the notion of things-in-themselves. For Schopenhauer, the truth of idealism (or the mind-dependence of objects) is guaranteed by the simple statement "no object without subject" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 461). To be an object, for Schopenhauer, implies being an object *for a subject*; that is, when we reflect on the concept of an object we find that it can only coherently imply that it is an object for a

subject of cognition. What is rather puzzling in this formulation, however, is that Schopenhauer's conception of what constitutes 'subject' and 'object' is, at times, quite different from Kant's conception of these concepts. Schopenhauer takes the words 'object' and 'representation' as being interchangeable. Any object which we can become aware of is, by virtue of *our awareness of it* always an object *for a subject*; which is to say a representation in the subject. As he writes in a letter: "For to be Subject means, to know; and to know means, to have representation. Object and representation are one and the same thing" (Schopenhauer, *Two Essays*, 1989, p. xxiv). For Schopenhauer "To be an object is to be a representation [...] 'object' cannot refer to anything existing outside what is present in the subject's consciousness" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 143). This simple claim, Schopenhauer believes captures and proves the truth of the mind-dependence of objects of experience – that is, it proves the truth of idealism (Schopenhauer, *WWR 1*, 2010, pp. 35-6).⁷³ But the claim that the world is mind-dependent was, at the time of Schopenhauer, neither a novel nor particularly controversial claim; both Berkeley and Kant had averred similar claims prior to Schopenhauer. What *is* interesting, is Schopenhauer's claim that the subject is that which knows everything, but which is itself known by none (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 118). He, at one point, even compares the subject to the eye, which can see everything except itself.⁷⁴ The obvious question this raises is: how about when I see, hear, touch, etc. myself or when I see other people in the world (or vice versa)? Surely these would count as instances where the subject is being known in one way or another? Schopenhauer's response to this is a dual conception of the subject. When I am empirically aware of myself, I am aware of myself, *not* as subject, but rather as an object amongst

⁷³ As Janaway points out, Schopenhauer's claim of 'no object without subject' might be self-evident for representationalism but, on its own, it does not suffice to ensure the truth of idealism (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 139). Schopenhauer's argument may establish that any object which is or can be known by us has a mind-dependent status, but this does not rule out that there are other 'things' which exist independently of our existence as subjects (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 141).

⁷⁴ See Schopenhauer, *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, 1974, §41, p. 208 and Janaway, 1989, p. 119.

objects. The point is that even when we know ourselves as an empirical object, this empirical object is once again presented *for a consciousness* or *for a subject*. Thus, that for which I become an empirical object cannot itself be known, for it would then have to be known through something else, *ad infinitum*. As we find in Schopenhauer's notebooks (as early as 1812): "That the subject should become object for itself is the most monstrous contradiction ever thought of: for subject and object can only be thought one in relation to the other [...] If the subject is to become an object, it presupposes as object another subject – where is this to come from?" (Der handschriftliche Nachlass 2, p. 334, quoted in Janaway, 1989, p. 120). But according to this formulation, we find a striking similarity between Schopenhauer and Kant; for, it was the latter who, in the A-edition of the fourth paralogism, stated that "Now it is indeed very illuminating that I cannot cognize as an object itself that which I must presuppose in order to cognize an object at all" (A402)⁷⁵. Thus, what Schopenhauer is getting at through his claims on the unknowability of the subject of knowledge, is very similar to what Kant is highlighting in the Fourth Paralogism; namely that I cannot know that which is presupposed for knowledge, namely, the subject of knowledge. In fact, Schopenhauer's formulation of the subject of knowledge has striking similarities to Kant's conception of the 'I' as pure or original apperception. There, Kant also distinguishes between original apperception and my empirical self which we may characterise as the "collection of my mental states appearing in inner sense" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 102). Thus, Kant here takes quite a Humean position whereby my empirical self is made up of my various mental states. However, as we know from our discussion on the Transcendental Deduction, this conception does not suffice to give an adequate account of the self as a whole. That is,

⁷⁵ This point is made by Janaway, 1989, p. 123. However, a difference between Kant and Schopenhauer's accounts which, I believe, should be noted is that at A402 Kant is talking about the impossibility of knowing the Self as the transcendental unity of apperception. However, Schopenhauer is bringing attention to the point that when I make myself into an object, or when I introspect, there is always 'something' which eludes me, namely, a certain perspective which always gets left out. In Chapter 9, we will see how Nietzsche attempts to reject as incoherent the concept of the thing-in-itself from similar considerations.

although Kant is sympathetic towards Hume's view of the self, and critical of the Cartesian view of the self as a substance (at least insofar as the self is meant to be knowable as such), he recognises that the Humean view of the empirical self requires, or presupposes, a further conception of the self as that which unites the various representations. When I introspect through inner sense all I find are my various perceptions, none of which include a perception of a pure self. Now, for someone like Hume, the self would be exhausted through these characterisations, or these bundles or heaps of perception (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 104). For Kant, however, the pressing question regarding this conception of the self is the following: how can it be that I have a 'heap' or 'bundle' of perceptions in the first place? The answer, Kant believes, is that having a bundle of perceptions must surely imply that each of these perceptions can be ascribed to my identical self (Ibid.). This self, to whom my empirical perceptions must be ascribed, is what Kant, in the deduction, called pure or original apperception. As Kant puts it: "For only because I ascribe all perceptions to one consciousness (of original apperception) can I say of all perceptions that I am conscious of them" (A122). Importantly for Kant, however, through apperception (and later the synthetic unity of apperception) we are not afforded any knowledge of our 'selves'. "In the synthetic original unity of apperception, I am conscious not as I appear to myself, nor **as** I am in myself, but only **that** I am" (B157). Thus, original apperception is not a conception of the self through which I can come to know myself, but it is rather that conception of a self which must obtain in order for there to be the possibility of ordinary experience and an empirical self. We can now see the resemblance between this conception of the self and Schopenhauer's conception of the subject as that which knows all but is known by none.

With these conceptions and clarifications of what the terms "subject" and "object" mean for Schopenhauer, we may turn to his criticism of Kant's alleged misuse of the category of causality. Following the latter, Schopenhauer subscribes to the belief that our intellect has certain forms which we can know *a priori* and which therefore have their

source in us and we bring to experience.⁷⁶ But whereas Kant would argue that these determinations are space and time as the forms of intuition, and the twelve categories as the forms of thought, Schopenhauer believes that there are only three such *a priori* determinations. He retains space and time from Kant; in fact, the absence of any argument for the *a priori* nature of space and time suggests that Schopenhauer accepted the claims established in the Aesthetic as evidently true.⁷⁷ Regarding the categories, however, he believed that Kant was too concerned with the architectonic of his system and that consequently eleven of the twelve categories were superfluous and could be jettisoned. The only one which had to be retained was the category of causality (Gardiner, 1963, p. 102)⁷⁸. The divergence between these views is not as important for Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant, as is their mutual agreement over the category of causality as an *a priori* determination of experience. But precisely because it is an *a priori* category, causality is also precluded from being applied to the realm between the subject and the object. Schopenhauer gave the role and function of causality in experience – its range and validity – a detailed treatment in his inaugural dissertation *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason (Fourfold Root)*. There he distinguished both the different forms which the Principle of Sufficient Reason (PSR) assumes depending on the type of necessity involved *and* the domain within which PSR has applicability. Schopenhauer argues in both the *Fourfold Root* and in *WWR* that PSR is a principle which, having its seat in the subject, is only applicable to the realm between objects in the phenomenal world (Gardiner, 1963, p. 81). PSR is a principle used by the subject in cognizing the relations of different objects of

⁷⁶ Schopenhauer seems to, uncritically, accept Kant's move from the claim that we can know the form of experience *a priori* to the further claim that whatever we can know a priori must have its source in us and we bring to experience; the move from the first to the second claim is not an obvious one. See Cassam, 2003, pp. 87-108 and Janaway, 1989, p.39-41.

⁷⁷ According to Janaway: "Schopenhauer takes over [the Transcendental Aesthetic's] central doctrine, the ideality of space and time as *a priori* forms of intuition, and incorporates it virtually unchanged into his own version of idealism" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 155).

⁷⁸ I will not go into the details of Schopenhauer's reduction of the categories to only one. It should be noted however that his success in doing this is questionable, especially his reduction of the category of substance to that of causality. For our purposes, however, what is important is that both Schopenhauer and Kant took causality to be an *a priori* determination of experience.

knowledge to one another and it is a condition for the cognition of objects in general; we cannot but think of objects as having the ability of entering into causal relations with other objects, which in turn all possess this property as well.⁷⁹ But we also know that another condition of something being known, that is, a condition of being an object, is that there be a subject. In fact, PSR being an *a priori* determination of the subject, means that in order for it to have applicability, we must first posit a subject; this subject being the necessary presupposition in order for PSR to have applicability. To phrase it differently, PSR is a principle which is applicable to objects, and any object already assumes that there is a subject who is cognizing it. But this should suffice to demonstrate why PSR cannot be applied between an object and a subject. Something is only within the domain of PSR insofar as it is an object – but it is only an object insofar as it is known by a subject. Thus, a presupposition for anything to be within the realm of PSR is that it already be known by a subject – the subject is that which is presupposed in order for PSR to have any applicability. This means that we cannot apply PSR to the realm *between* subject and object; that is, we cannot assign causal relations to that (subject) which is a prerequisite and which is presupposed in order for the law of causality to have applicability. As Schopenhauer phrases it in WWR, the content of PSR is “something that belongs to the object as such. But the object as such always presupposes the subject as its necessary correlate: so the subject always remains outside the jurisdiction of the principle of sufficient reason” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 35).

A natural objection which may occur is that surely objects in the world are capable of affecting us. Here is where we must bear in mind Schopenhauer’s dual conception of the subject. Once again, it is true that objects can affect the subject insofar as the subject is considered as object. Indeed, the subject as body is an object amongst objects and just as it can be known as such it can also be affected by objects as such. However, what

⁷⁹ Most minimally we must think of bodies as repelling each other insofar as we cannot imagine two objects occupying the same physical space, implying a causal relation (Gardiner, 1963, p. 101).

Schopenhauer is drawing attention to is that the subject of knowledge, as the correlate of the object, in the same way that it cannot be known as such, can neither be subject to the PSR (it is in fact *because* it cannot be known [i.e. become an object] that it cannot be bound by PSR, and vice versa). It is noteworthy that Kant had argued for a similar restriction of causality (indeed of all the categories) to the phenomenal realm, and yet their methods for achieving this diverged significantly.

Kant's derivation of things-in-themselves, Schopenhauer believes, was in glaring opposition to this truth regarding the principle of sufficient reason. After Jacobi first highlighted the problem, many others, including Fichte, J.S. Beck, and Schulze, criticized Kant on this point (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 71). As Schopenhauer puts it:

"This defect, as everyone knows, is the way he chose to introduce the thing-in-itself – an unacceptable way, as was demonstrated extensively by G. E. Schulze in *Aenesidemus*, and was soon acknowledged as the untenable point of his system. The issue can be clarified quite briefly. Although the fact was hidden under many twists and turns, Kant grounded the presupposition of the thing-in-itself in an inference according to the law of causality, namely that empirical intuition, or more precisely the *sensation* in our sense organs that generates empirical intuition, must have an external cause" (Schopenhauer, *WWR* 1, 2010, p. 463).

The problem which Schopenhauer notes is perhaps the most obstinate and potentially damaging criticism made of the Kantian philosophy. Henry Allison's assessment of it is that "Of all the criticisms that have been raised against Kant's philosophy, the most persistent concern the thing-in-itself, particularly the notorious claim that it, or the transcendental object, somehow 'affects' the mind" (Allison, 2004, p. 50). The most blatant assertion by Kant to this effect is found at the start of the *Aesthetic* when he says: "In whatever way and through whatever means a cognition may relate to objects, that through which it relates

immediately to them, and at which all thought as a means is directed as an end, is intuition. This, however, takes place only insofar as the object is *given to us*; but this in turn, is possible only if it *affect the mind* in a certain way” (A19/B33, emphases mine).⁸⁰

Jacobi was the first to have noticed this problem with Kant’s derivation of the thing-in-itself. But more than merely highlighting an inconsistency, Jacobi had noted how fundamental this inconsistency was for the whole of Kant’s philosophy. As he writes regarding the inference to things-in-themselves from our bodily sensations (via an application of causality): “‘*Without* this presupposition I could not enter the system, and *with* this presupposition I could not remain in it’” (Jacobi quoted in Janaway, 1989, p. 70). Kant seems to need this application of causality in order to account for the origin of experience, and yet the philosophy which is established from this starting point is that any application of a category of the understanding beyond the phenomenal realm is invalid.⁸¹

Although Schopenhauer’s criticism is certainly a cogent one, it should be noted that Kant never explicitly states that the thing-in-itself is in causal relation with the subject but rather that it *grounds* or has some form of *affection* on the subject. The reason for this must be that for Kant the categories govern the synthesis of sensible data, which in turn must always be spatio-temporal. In fact, for the categories to have a real, as opposed to a merely logical, use, they require the schemata in order to have applicability – which is to say a rule which instructs us how to synthesise, not just thoughts about objects, but spatio-temporal representations. Thus, when Kant claims that something in itself must ground our representations, we must not think of this relation of ‘grounding’ as equivalent to a causal relation. In order to claim a causal relation, Kant would have to assume that things-in-

⁸⁰ According to Adickes, the assertion of affection regarding the thing-in-itself (sometimes referred to as transcendental object) is made by Kant in the following passages: A44/B61, B72, A190/B235, A358, A380, A393, A494/B522 (Allison, 2004, p. 460).

⁸¹ Now, it may seem as if Jacobi and Schopenhauer are highlighting two different problems (N.B. Schopenhauer criticized causality between subject and object, whereas Jacobi seems to be bringing attention to an instance of assigning causality between thing-in-itself and appearance) but upon consideration it should be clear that they are really addressing the same issue; each position is entailed in the other. Claiming that a thing-in-itself causes the appearance in us, is really the same as saying that the thing-in-itself has some effect on us (as subjects) which gives rise to the appearance; both positions imply the same unjustified extension of causality.

themselves are spatio-temporal objects. But as we may recall from Ch. 2.2:1, in the Fourth Paralogism Kant makes explicit that the objects which affect us, at the transcendental level, are non-spatio-temporal things in themselves (A372), thus the relation cannot be a straightforward causal one.

However, if we grant that Kant is not illegitimately extending the category of causality in deriving things-in-themselves, then the question remains what exactly he means when he says that ‘something’, in itself, grounds appearances. Simply re-phrasing the problem as one about affection as opposed to causality, does not seem enough to defend Kant. In fact, Schopenhauer is fully aware that Kant does not claim a “causal” relation between things-in-themselves and the subject but sees this, rather, as an admission of guilt by Kant. He criticizes Kant for implicitly having recognized the trespassing of his own strictures but having turned a blind eye to it and attempted to hide the illegitimacy of the argument. He charges Kant with dissimulating the error in his argument by “creep[ing] around the issue” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 475) by not explicitly saying that things-in-themselves *cause* appearances but rather talking about the “grounds of appearances” (Ibid.)⁸². Thus, the question is how we are to think this non-spatio-temporal ‘something’ which is supposed to be the ground of appearances.⁸³ We must ask ourselves: Does it make any sense to take an ordinary empirical object, abstract from it its colour, hardness, matter (substance), shape (spatiality) and temporality and claim that whatever we are left with, somehow ‘affects’ us? Regardless of how we are to think of this notion of ‘affection’, it seems as though that which we are meant to apply it to is a vacuous nothing. Allison, not uncharacteristically, attempts to defend Kant against the charge of incoherence regarding things-in-themselves by saying that “the cognitive vacuity of a consideration of things as they are in themselves does not amount to incoherence. This

⁸² N.B. A. Wood also mentions this by saying that Kant prefers this terminology because it is less metaphysically committing (Wood, 2005, p. 64).

⁸³ The issue of the thinkability of the thing-in-itself will be given a detailed treatment in Chapter 9 when we consider Nietzsche’s rejection of the concept. What follows here will be dealt with in greater detail in our final chapter.

would only be the case if the understanding could not even *think* things apart from the conditions of sensibility, which Kant repeatedly affirms we can” (Allison, 2004, p. 56). But, without any argument or proof that we in fact *can* think things-in-themselves, this simply remains an assertion and a bare assurance, which we may counter with the assurance that we cannot, and to borrow a quote from Hegel (from a different context) we may say that “one bare assurance is worth just as much as another” (Hegel, 1977, §76, p. 49). But instead of leaving our position as a bare assertion we may draw attention to Kant’s second argument for the *a priority* of space. There Kant claimed that insofar as one wishes to represent any outer object, “One can never represent that there is no space, though one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it” (A25/B38-9). Now, one may wish to counter this by drawing a distinction between representation and thought, and claim that for Kant representing an object and thinking an object are distinct. However, this does not seem to quite be enough to defend Kant. For, the argument in the *Aesthetic* is precisely intended to demonstrate that we cannot represent the lack of space *in thought* or that insofar as we think anything outer we must think it as necessarily being spatial.⁸⁴ Thus, insofar as we do not do this, we do not think of anything whatsoever. Thus, we cannot think of things-in-themselves as the grounds of appearances since the term ‘affection’ or ‘ground’, however these are to be understood, could never be applied to the vacuity which would constitute the thing-in-itself. Thus, in thinking of the ground of appearances, we in fact think of a something in general = X, which is to say the transcendental object.⁸⁵ But, the transcendental object, as the general mark of truth, is a completely categorial concept, and as such must presuppose spatio-temporality. But we

⁸⁴ This argument, admittedly, runs the risk of claiming that Kant’s arguments in the *Aesthetic* are intended to demonstrate the analytic entailment of the concept of spatiality in our concept of an object. Our argument is not however overcome merely by bringing attention to this point. Rather, I believe that Kant would have to defend himself against such a claim.

⁸⁵ This claim will be argued for in Chapter 9: 7.

know from our discussion on Kant's ontological denial from Ch.2.3 that Kant believes that things-in-themselves must be non-spatio-temporal.⁸⁶

We may, thus, summarise the problem as follows: If in thinking the ground of appearances we think of the transcendental object, Schopenhauer is certainly correct in that this involves an illegitimate extension of the category of causality between subject and object in itself. If, on the other hand, Kant wishes to stick with the notion of 'ground' or 'affection' because the thing-in-itself is meant to be non-spatio-temporal, we may question the coherence of assigning the concept of 'grounding' to a vacuous concept such as the thing-in-itself.

Schopenhauer sees this central problem in Kant's philosophy as the result of someone who wishes to be an idealist and yet is incapable of accounting for objectivity, or objecthood, "wholly within the realm of the mind-dependent" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 70). That is, it was Kant's desire not to be assimilated to someone like Berkeley which Schopenhauer believes led him to change the text of the *CPR* from the first to the second edition in such a way that made him an inconsistent idealist (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 58 & 70).⁸⁷ Janaway

⁸⁶ Allison believes that Kant's claim regarding the things which ground appearances, namely things in themselves, is merely that they cannot be *represented* as being spatio-temporal, not that they cannot *be* spatio-temporal (Allison, 2004, p. 70). I cannot see anyway that this position is reconcilable with Kant's ontological denial of space in the Aesthetic where he says that "It is therefore indubitably certain and not merely possible or even probable that space and time, as the necessary conditions of all (outer and inner) experience, are merely subjective conditions for all our intuition" (A48-9/B66).

⁸⁷ This assessment of Kant as having changed his position between the two editions is, however, questionable and one with which Janaway, citing a passage from A42/B59 where Kant seems committed to both idealism and the existence of things-in-themselves, disagrees (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 76). However, what Schopenhauer, seemingly correctly, draws attention to is the similarity between Kant and Berkeley's positions. According to Janaway, Schopenhauer realises that Berkeley does not argue that the outside world does not exist (i.e. he was not an empirical idealist as was commonly assumed about him in the 18th century) but rather that its existence is mind-dependent. Thus, we may say that Berkeley was both an idealist and an empirical realist – much like Kant. Now, this raises the question about the validity of Kant's defence of himself against Garve's review in which Kant was implicated as a proponent of Berkeley's idealism. Was it the case that Kant was wrong and Garve correct? In answering this, we should bear in mind that, regardless of whether Kant got Berkeley wrong, his argument is directed towards the position of empirical idealism (which he wrongly attributed to Berkeley). Thus, despite Kant's position being more Berkeleyan than he may have realised, his defence against Garve's accusations is still a valid one because of the commonplace misunderstanding, prevalent at the time, of Berkeley

claims that in his own philosophical system, Schopenhauer is scrupulous not to commit this same mistake of Kant's (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 68). It is important therefore to consider how Schopenhauer believes he can overcome this problem whilst at the same time retaining his commitment to (a) the mind-dependence of objects, and (b) the receptivity of our intuitions. We noted that it was Kant's commitment to these two positions which had led him to posit a causal relation between things-in-themselves and phenomena. It must now be seen whether Schopenhauer can hold fast to these two positions without needing recourse to the concept of the thing-in-itself.

2. Schopenhauer's Theory of Cognition

Before we delve into Schopenhauer's account of the emergence of experience we should note why exactly we are focusing on this part of WWR. According to Gardiner, for example, Schopenhauer attempts to overcome the "overall problem of the relation between phenomena and things-in-themselves which haunts Kant's philosophy like an uneasy ghost" through an analysis of the two ways in which we can know our own bodies; namely indirectly as representation (object) or directly as Will (thing-in-itself) (Gardiner, 1963, p. 58)⁸⁸. It is our possession of this two-fold knowledge which allows us to know ourselves as thing-in-itself and yet avoids positing any causal relation between ourselves as

being an empirical idealist. As Janaway points out: "Berkeley had an almost universal reputation in the eighteenth century as a sceptic, a solipsist, and an absurd denier of the existence of the world" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 56). Thus, to say that Kant was in fact much more like Berkeley than he thought is *not* to say that Kant's arguments led to empirical idealism, but rather that Berkeley's position was in fact an empirically realistic one. Thus, we must be careful to be clear on the sense in which Kant was closer to Berkeley than he perhaps realised. Was it because (a) Kant's position, in fact, led to empirical idealism which he had attributed to Berkeley? Or because (b) Kant (along with Garve and other 18th century philosophers) had misinterpreted Berkeley as an empirical idealist when he, in fact, was an empirical realist? It is undoubtedly the second of these, and this has a very important implication; namely that Kant's defence of himself against Garve was a legitimate one because on Garve's reading, both Kant and Berkeley would have been empirical idealists.

⁸⁸ I shall briefly return to this in Chapter 5: 3 to show why knowledge of ourselves as Will is still restricted to the phenomenal world.

representations and ourselves as Will. Although Gardiner is certainly correct in this respect, we are not interested in whether Schopenhauer can give an account of the essence of the world which does not have to posit any causal relation between phenomena and things-in-themselves. What we *are* interested in, and what matters insofar as whether Schopenhauer can overcome Jacobi's problem, is whether he can account for the emergence of phenomena without positing things-in-themselves as the grounds of these phenomena. This is what is required for his account to overcome the problem at stake, and for this reason we must consider not Schopenhauer's account of the world as Will but his account of it as representation, or – more specifically – the emergence of objective experience.

The difference between Kant and Schopenhauer on the issue of assigning causality between thing-in-itself and appearance, or between subject and object⁸⁹, cuts, if not to the core of their respective philosophies, then at least to the foundation upon which each builds his theory. In order to overcome this problem, which seems both inseparable from and inimical to the Kantian philosophy, Schopenhauer is forced to reconsider the very origin of experience, including a re-conception of the different faculties of the intellect and their respective functions. We find here that Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant's derivation of things-in-themselves overlaps and intertwines with his criticism of Kant's distinction, or lack thereof in Schopenhauer's eyes, between intuitive and abstract cognition. "In the *Critique of Pure Reason* we are constantly confronted with Kant's major and fundamental mistake [...], the failure to distinguish between abstract, discursive cognition and intuitive cognition" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 503). It is in his account of the difference between these two forms of cognition where we will encounter both Schopenhauer's treatment of the role of causality in experience *and* his account of the minimum conditions required for the emergence of experience and cognition of objects.

⁸⁹ I am not here saying that the subject is a thing-in-itself. For the entailment of causality between thing-in-itself and appearance *and* subject and object see above.

The first difference to be considered in Schopenhauer's account from that of Kant's is the different roles and functions assigned by the former to the different faculties of our intellect. With regards to intuitions, and the corresponding faculty which receives intuitions, namely sensibility, Schopenhauer is more or less in agreement with Kant.⁹⁰ Regarding the understanding, however, there is a great divergence in their philosophies. We can recall from the previous chapter how, for Kant, sensibility is the faculty which deals with intuitions (whether these be pure or empirical) and the understanding is the faculty of thought – that is, the faculty which deals with the unification and subsumption of intuitions under (pure or empirical) concepts through the act of making judgments. Furthermore, reason is the faculty of drawing inferences (A131/B169). On Schopenhauer's account, however, reason is the faculty which deals with concepts, and the understanding has merely one function: to apply the law of causality to sensations our bodies have in order to infer from these the existence of an object outside of us. "To have cognition of causality is the understanding's only function, its single capability" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 32). As pointed out by Janaway, Schopenhauer "retains for the understanding a (concept-free) role in empirical intuition. So by the same move, empirical cognition is purified of any taint of strictly conceptual thought" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 51). Thus, Schopenhauer agrees with Kant that what is required for experience or cognition of objects is both sensibility and understanding, but his revised roles and functions of the understanding mean that the actual requirements for experience to emerge vary greatly in their two accounts. What Schopenhauer wants to show is that there is a level of consciousness, which he calls perception, through which we have an awareness and consciousness of objects which is non-conceptual, and "although his account requires the activity of the understanding to supplement the reception of sensations to convert them into objective experience, the understanding is held to operate

⁹⁰ Although Schopenhauer would claim that this is not strictly true, we will see how they are much more in agreement over the role and function of sensibility than Schopenhauer would like to believe.

without concepts” (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 158). It is Schopenhauer’s belief in the possibility and actuality of this minimal form of consciousness, and the role which PSR plays therein, which creates a large gulf between his account of experience and that of Kant.

Though he is largely silent on the issue, Schopenhauer seems to agree with Kant that our intuitions are sensible as opposed to intellectual. Perception must therefore begin with some sensations which we have in our bodies. From this sensation, “the Understanding grasps the given sensation of the body as an *effect* (a word comprehended only by the understanding), and this effect as such must necessarily have a *cause*” (Schopenhauer, *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, 1974, §21, p. 77). Thus, Schopenhauer believes, like Kant, that intuitions supply the necessary data for our experience of objects. Furthermore, and also like Kant, he believes that we only have experience of objects after the activity of the understanding on this sensory material. The role of the understanding in this process, *unlike* in Kant’s theory, is applying the principle of sufficient reason to the intuitive sensations to infer the cause of the sensation, which leaves the subject with the object or representation. In Schopenhauer’s story, then, the inference to a cause of our sensations is precisely the mechanism by which we come to experience an object. The inference to a cause of our sensations is not, for him, intended to imply some noumenal origin of our sensations – it is rather an inference performed by the understanding, on its way to giving rise to objective experience. Schopenhauer even charges Kant with inconsistency in claiming (a) that the understanding must subsume intuitions under concepts in order to give us cognition of objects, and (b) that we are given an object in intuition; both claims made by Kant at A50/B74. What Kant says at A50/B74 makes it seem as if he is both affirming and denying that we need concepts for objective experience.

Schopenhauer’s divergence from Kant regarding the conditions of possibility of experience revolve to a great extent around what Schopenhauer saw as a biased, one-sided

treatment of cognition by Kant – especially the latter’s apparent preference for abstract thought over intuitions. Schopenhauer was concerned with trying to arrive at a form of cognition and experience which is immediate in that it is not mediated by concepts. He saw concepts as derived from intuitions, and so whereas concepts are nothing without intuitions, intuitions without concepts are still something – even more, Schopenhauer believes they amount to cognition of objects. Against this, Schopenhauer points out that Kant’s account favoured abstract thought to such an extent that it reversed this arrow of dependence to the point where Kant claimed (at B309) that though intuitions without concepts are empty, concepts without intuitions are still something (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 503).⁹¹ Schopenhauer proceeds to separate intuitive from abstract conceptual knowledge, labeling the former *Erkenntnis*, which we may call ‘cognition’, whereas the latter he denotes by the word *Wissen* (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 161). However, Schopenhauer’s notion of *Erkenntnis*, which is supposed to be a form of immediate non-conceptual knowledge, is, in the aftermath of Kant’s *CPR*, in serious need of justification. How can he demonstrate that we possess such a mode of cognition of objects? Schopenhauer believes that all of us possess such cognition of objects in our everyday dealings with the world. He gives the example of a practiced billiards player and the familiarity which he possesses of “the laws concerning the reciprocal impact of elastic bodies” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 80). This person’s cognition of the impact of bodies is wholly different from the knowledge which the scientist has of such bodies. The scientist can communicate his knowledge in terms of concepts whereas the experienced billiards player simply has an intuitive grasp of where he must hit the cue ball to get the desired amount of spin, and how hard he must hit it to leave it at a certain place on the table. However, he could never express this intuitive cognition in terms of abstract scientific concepts; that is, he could never say that if the cue ball is x distance

⁹¹ We will return to this in Chapter 5: 2 when assessing Schopenhauer’s criticisms of Kant and will find Schopenhauer’s argument to be misdirected and misplaced.

from the top cushion, at an angle of y degrees from the ball to be potted, one must apply z amount of force etc. in order to pot the desired ball. If the scientist was given the same situation, and was provided with the relevant data (weight of the billiard balls, angles, etc.) he could calculate the proper application of force at the correct angles, etc. required in order to pot the ball in question. However, if the same scientist was asked to attempt the pot he would undoubtedly have less success than the experienced billiards player. Furthermore, Schopenhauer believes that in these instances abstract theoretical knowledge can in fact hinder us from performing tasks which we can normally perform intuitively with relative ease and fluidity. He gives another example of our intuitive grasp of shaving and how it is of little or no use for us to know the exact angles at which we must hold the razor to our face as we shave, if we “do not know it intuitively, i.e. have the knack of it” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 81).

Schopenhauer's theory does indeed seem to have some intuitive plausibility. There certainly seems to be a clear difference between our intuitive grasp of performing certain tasks and the way in which we know certain things theoretically, abstractly, and conceptually. This, Schopenhauer believes, can also be extended to our experience of causality, whereby we can draw a distinction between causality as a concept and the non-conceptual role which causality plays in perception (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 163). Kant would claim that experiencing causality is tantamount to making “explicit causal judgments” (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 164). But a case in point in favour of Schopenhauer is animals. Animals seem to be able to experience a causally ordered world without the ability to make explicit causal judgments. This criticism is one which is often leveled against Kant, and it seems that not only animals, but that we too experience causality without having to make explicit causal judgments; as Janaway avers: “The mind seems, as it were, to perceive simply in the medium of causality, much as it does in that of space and time, without the necessity of explicit causal judgments” (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's*

Philosophy, 1989, pp. 163-4). However, such criticisms seem to miss the mark when we consider that the level at which such causal judgments are required by Kant's theory is in transcendental and not general logic. Kant's argument would not be susceptible to the claim that simply because I do not make an explicit causal judgment at the general level, I do not experience the world as being causally structured. It is rather that *whenever* I experience causality, my *non-conceptual intuitions* have been united and ordered judgmentally.⁹² What Schopenhauer is referring to is putting *concepts* into causal propositions, which is what we may say science does or what we do in determining the specific cause of this or that event. It is perhaps true, as Janaway says, that "for all Kant says, an explicit judgment must occur every time anyone perceives a causal connection" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 164), but this is not a judgment of the kind we find in general logic; it is not something of which we are ever conscious and it must not be equated with the kind of causal judgments we make when we discern that the cause of, say, the red billiard ball moving was the cue ball striking it; these are all causal judgments made in a world already constituted and organized causally. It is rather the judgments made in the synthesis of our *non-conceptual representations* (intuitions) of which we have no empirical awareness. But, it should also be noted that this counter argument only has force against the claim that *we* (i.e. humans) need to be making explicit causal judgments to experience causality. The same argument regarding unifying appearances judgmentally at the transcendental level cannot be made for the case of animals. The reason for this is that Kant derived the categories (which govern unification of appearances) from the logical functions of judgment (which govern unification of concepts). Thus, although to experience causality one does not need to be making explicit causal judgments at the empirical level, it would seem that the ability to make such

⁹² "Therefore all manifold, insofar as it is given in **one** empirical intuition, is **determined** in regard one of the logical functions for judgment, by means of which, namely, it is brought to a consciousness in general. But now the categories are nothing other than these very functions for judging insofar as the manifold of a given intuition is determined with regard to them" (B143).

(hypothetical) judgments is a precondition for being able to synthesise non-conceptual appearances causally. Seeing as animals clearly lack the former ability, we could not coherently ascribe to them the ability to perform the latter either.⁹³

Conclusion

I have attempted in this chapter to demonstrate two central issues on which Schopenhauer's account of cognition of objects diverges from that of Kant's. To this end, I first explored Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant's derivation of things-in-themselves, through an alleged misuse of the PSR. We saw how on Schopenhauer's account, the inference drawn by the Understanding from the sensations in our bodies to a cause outside of us is precisely the way in which we come to have experience of phenomenal objects. It does not indicate, for him, any relation to some things, or entities, beyond the phenomenal realm – an inference which would be invalid and for which he criticizes not only Kant but also Fichte.⁹⁴ Secondly, I tried to show how this account of Schopenhauer's was embedded in a deeper difference between himself and Kant regarding the roles and functions of the different faculties of the intellect and the minimum conditions of possible experience. Here we found a much more glaring divergence between the two philosophers – namely, that Schopenhauer thought what many would consider Kant's most important discovery in philosophy ill-founded and plainly wrong. The task for Chapter 5 will be to re-evaluate Schopenhauer's claims to assess their relative strength against Kant's epistemology.

⁹³ A more general criticism which is worth mentioning at this stage is that one may wish to cast doubt on, and be skeptical of, the whole idea of transcendental synthesis (as Strawson does) – a position which I would be sympathetic towards. See previous chapter.

⁹⁴ Fichte derived object from subject. See: Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 34 & 48.

CHAPTER 5: Kant *Contra* Schopenhauer

Introduction

The previous chapter was primarily exegetical in that it presented, as uncontroversially as possible, the major points of contention and divergence between Kant and Schopenhauer's respective epistemologies. I will now turn to assess the coherence of Schopenhauer's theory as presented in Chapter 4. Two specific issues will be addressed: firstly whether Schopenhauer's account of the role of causality in experience overcomes the problem which Jacobi noted in the Kantian system, and, secondly, whether his theory of the possibility of non-conceptual knowledge is sound. I will take each issue in turn and will attempt to show how on both points Schopenhauer fails in securely grounding his arguments. Finally, I will turn to consider the difference between Schopenhauer and Kant's accounts of the veridical status of the empirical world. Whereas we found, in Part One, that Kant's position is relatively straight forward, Schopenhauer seems to be indecisive as to what kind of reality can be assigned to the empirical world. For our purposes, it will be useful to consider how Kant and Schopenhauer's positions differ on this issue, for it is an issue on which Nietzsche is ambivalent in his early period.

1. Causality (Reconsidered)

The first issue we must consider is whether Schopenhauer's account of experience is not as susceptible to Jacobi's objection as Kant's was. Since, on his account, intuition is mediated by causality, is Schopenhauer not leaving himself open to the charge that there is causality between subject and object? This is a question which Schopenhauer considers in §5 of WWR and to which he believes he has an answer. He responds to the possible objection by claiming that any such inference from sensations of changes in our bodies to the positing of causality between subject and object is invalid (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 34). It is furthermore the assumption of the validity of such positing which has led to the dispute over the existence of the external world. Schopenhauer presents the issue as one whose two camps have been dogmatism and skepticism. Dogmatism assumes a causal relation between object and subject; it first appears as realism which assumes that the object affects the subject and later as idealism (Schopenhauer has Fichte in mind here) which assumes that the subject affects the object, or that the object is derived from the subject (ibid.). Opposed to this camp there is skepticism which attempts to bring the reality of the whole of the external world under question by claiming that if the law of causality is derived from experience, its application to account for the emergence of experience is illegitimate (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 35). Schopenhauer's answer to this problem is that all previous philosophies have started out either with the object or the subject and have tried to derive one from the other (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 153). Any such derivation must furthermore be according to PSR meaning that both sides rely on a principle which has no applicability within the domain which it is being applied. Schopenhauer instead claims that "the object always presupposes the subject as its necessary correlate" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 35). This means that we can only speak about objects or representations insofar as we assume that there is a subject who can experience the object. Now, and only now, is the object in the domain of the PSR which is really a principle of the understanding – a law of the perceiving subject's

intellect. In fact, strictly speaking, only now is the object *an object*! Thus we cannot assume that before the object *is*, before it has *being*, which is to say before it is experienced by a subject, that it can be anything at all, let alone that it can be something which has causal powers over the subject. The problem with dogmatism is that it separates object from representation and assumes that the object somehow exists beyond, behind, or independently of the representation and, as such, *causes* the representation. Schopenhauer's view, on the other hand, is that to be an object means to be a representation and that there is only an object insofar as it is someone's representation.

Despite his treatment of the issue, there still lurks a feeling that Schopenhauer is not quite addressing the problem at stake. If we go back to Kant, we find that one of the ways in which he arrived at the thought of things-in-themselves was through the thought of a something which must ground our intuitions or that which is given to us. Schopenhauer raises this exact point (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 463) and claims that Kant did this in order to avoid being assimilated to Berkeley. But the demand for a ground of appearances is a direct result of the fact that sensibility is receptive rather than spontaneous in nature. Kant had considered in *CPR* that our possession of intuitions can have one of two sources: either we possess intellectual intuition, whereby we think objects into existence (that is, our thinking an object and being presented with it or being 'given' it are one and the same act), or our intuition is sensible and receptive, whereby in order for us to have an object, our senses must be affected by something. That our intuitions are not intellectual seems fairly uncontroversial because of the separation between the acts of thinking and perceiving, and how we cannot force or bring about a perception through our mere thinking of an object. Moreover, if we indeed did have intellectual intuition there would be nothing unknowable about things-in-themselves, for there would be no mediation between things as they are in themselves and how they are determined according to the *a priori* determinations of our intellect. If our intuition then is indeed sensible and receptive, we are left with the thought that something must affect our

sensibility which causes us to have intuitions. The questions to be considered then are: 'How, if at all, does Schopenhauer's account overcome this problem?' 'What exactly is Schopenhauer's account of intuitions and is it maintainable without the reliance on things-in-themselves?'

Despite never using this terminology, Schopenhauer maintains that our intuition is sensible and requires that we be affected by things. In pointing out that the understanding alone does not suffice to give us objective experience (which is basically equivalent to denying that we have intellectual intuition) he claims that the understanding cannot be applied "without some other thing as a starting point" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 41). This other thing, he calls, pure sensation, which is the immediate awareness we have of changes in our bodies – namely the raw material or data to which the understanding applies PSR and gives rise to experience of an object. Thus, the precondition for there to be any intuition and therefore experience of objects, is the "ability of bodies to act on each other and bring about alterations in each other" (Ibid.). As Janaway says, Schopenhauer indeed "equates sensation with our organs being affected" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 157). Regarding intuitions, Schopenhauer writes that they would never be possible "if we were not immediately acquainted with some effect that could serve as a starting point: but there are in fact such effects on the animal body" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 32). This statement puts beyond all doubt that Schopenhauer took our intuitions to be sensible. It is true that in the same passage he claims "all intuition is intellectual" (Ibid.). However, what Schopenhauer has in mind here is something wholly different from what Kant means by intellectual intuition. What Schopenhauer is pointing out here is that according to his theory all that is needed for experience of objects is intuition and the law of causality applied to these intuitions; that we do not need concepts for experience and that the combination of intuitions with the understanding's application of PSR gives us a state of consciousness of objects. This state of consciousness of objects is what Schopenhauer calls perception and he calls intuitions

intellectual because the understanding is already involved in our intuitive cognition (*Erkenntnis*) of the world. He does not mean by this that we have intellectual intuition in the sense that Kant spoke about it. This probably also explains why immediately after saying that 'all intuition is intellectual' he continues with the quote provided above, regarding the necessity of effects on animal bodies. Thus, we can safely conclude that Schopenhauer's account of our intuitions is that they are sensible in nature and not intellectual. Now, we must turn to see whether his commitment to our possession of sensible intuition can be maintained without the reliance on things-in-themselves?

An immediate question which arises when we consider Schopenhauer's quote about the effect on animal bodies is: "what causes that 'effect on animal bodies' which Schopenhauer equates with sensation [?]" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 159). Janaway claims that Schopenhauer takes that which causes these sensations to be empirical objects themselves; that is, he attempts to circumvent the problem of relying on things-in-themselves by positing empirical objects as the grounds of the effects on animal bodies. This leaves Schopenhauer in an extremely difficult position. We must bear in mind that he is attempting to demonstrate the origin of our experience of empirical objects and he does so by locating the different moments which go into constructing experience. One of these moments is the affection of our sensibility by bodies. It is only *after* we have an immediate awareness of the changes in our body that we apply the law of causality and then experience an empirical object. But surely this means that we cannot account for that which gave rise to the sensations (which in turn give us an empirical object) through the positing of an empirical object as the cause of these sensations? Schopenhauer seems to be assuming the existence of an empirical object as necessary in order to explain how an empirical object comes about; he is essentially assuming that the empirical object is the cause of one of the moments which makes up the empirical object, which is tantamount to claiming that the empirical object is *causa sui* – a concept which Schopenhauer, in the *Fourfold Root*, had labelled a "*contradictio in adjecto*"

(Schopenhauer, *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, 1974, §8, p. 18).

We thus come back full circle to the problem which confronted Kant. Kant's way out of this was to claim that things-in-themselves ground sensations in us – a claim which, though it overcomes the circularity of Schopenhauer's argument, is circular with respect to the larger context of Kant's work. Janaway claims that Schopenhauer *could* have perhaps found a way out of this circularity by drawing a distinction between empirical object and objective representation (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 159). This way, he could claim that empirical objects which exist in space and time prior to all experience cause sensations in us (*Ibid.*). The problem with this, of course, is that Schopenhauer refuses to separate object from representation, therefore blocking this possible option. Thus, it becomes evident, as Janaway claims, that Schopenhauer's "views about the construction of empirical objects on the occasion of our organs being affected are disastrous without the assumption that things in themselves cause the affection of our organs" (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 166). Interestingly, we find that that we once again return to Jacobi's dictum; namely, the paradoxical demand for things in themselves which is both necessary and unwarranted.

Schopenhauer seems to think he has exempted himself from even addressing the issue of the grounds of appearances because any such talk must assume the existence of objects which are not representations, something which, he believes, his philosophy has shown to be illegitimate. But he seems to forget how dependent his own philosophy is on the possibility of something being an 'object', 'entity', or 'thing', without or before it is an object of cognition; this is precisely a result of his commitment to our intuitions being sensible. He seems caught in the inevitable, and seemingly insurmountable, difficulty of claiming that we need intuitions in order to have an object, that our intuitions require affection, and yet refusing to posit anything other than an empirical object as that which affects us and therefore causes intuitions in us. But, as if this position were not confusing enough, Schopenhauer at times even seems to claim that appearances are *appearances of*

the world in itself, which is to be equated with the Will. In rejecting ‘theoretical egoism’ (solipsism) as belonging in a madhouse, Schopenhauer describes the position as one which denies that appearances are appearances of a will (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 129).⁹⁵ But, as pointed out by Janaway, Schopenhauer is suggesting then that his own position is one whereby “the will is the thing in itself of which everything is an appearance” (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 149) and that the absurdity in the solipsist position consists in “its denial that appearances are appearances of something existing in itself” (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 150). But if Schopenhauer is genuinely wedded to this claim, it puts him in a very difficult position for two reasons: (a) It goes against his claims in other parts of WWR where he says that the ground of intuitions is empirical objects (which of course is a circular argument itself), and (b) He commits the same fallacy for which he extensively criticizes Kant. Janaway, I believe, summarizes Schopenhauer’s position neatly when he says that “For all his complaint that Kant is not a consistent idealist because he relies on the thing in itself, we have here a hint that when it comes to the crux Schopenhauer will do the same” (Ibid.).

2. Kant Contra Schopenhauer on Cognition

We found that Schopenhauer’s attempt at resolving Jacobi’s problem was embedded in his account of the conditions of the possibility of experience. Unlike Kant, Schopenhauer believes that minimal experience is possible without the use of concepts and that in ordinary cognition (*Erkenntnis*) of the world we in fact operate non-conceptually. In Chapter 4 we considered the roles and functions of the different faculties of the intellect followed by examples which Schopenhauer believed demonstrate our non-conceptual

⁹⁵ “[A]s to whether the objects familiar to the individual only as representations are, like his own body, appearances of a will; as mentioned in the previous Book, this is what is really at stake in the question of the reality of the external world: to deny it is *theoretical egoism*” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 129).

mode of relating to the world. We will now turn to assess the coherence of Schopenhauer's argument and I shall demonstrate why I believe that his account is, on the whole, deficient and that his examples rest on a conflation of theoretical/scientific knowledge and non-conceptual knowledge. However, I shall also argue that there is a sense in which Schopenhauer's claim regarding the possibility of non-conceptual cognition may have some validity, though its scope is more limited than he suggests.

We may start by returning to Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant in the Appendix for what Kant says at B309 which we mentioned above (Ch. 4.2). If we recall, Schopenhauer criticizes Kant at this point for claiming that intuitions without concepts are empty whereas concepts without intuitions are still something (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 503). Schopenhauer continues to claim that "This is the exact opposite of the truth, because concepts get their meaning and content only from their relation to intuitive representations, from which they are abstracted and derived, which is to say constructed by omitting everything inessential" (Ibid.). This line of thought, whereby concepts depend for their existence on intuitions and that the latter, therefore, have more independent reality than the former is found throughout WWR. We find quite early in Book 1, for example, that Schopenhauer describes concepts as "representations of representations" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 63). Concepts have a necessary relation to intuitions of which they are representations. Indeed, "the whole essence of an abstract representation [concept] lies in just one single thing: its relation to another representation, its cognitive ground" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 64). Schopenhauer does, however, acknowledge that the cognitive ground for a concept may be another concept, but that this regression cannot go on indefinitely; at some point the concept must be related to an intuition from which it derives its content. Of course, nothing which has been said so far contradicts Kant. Kant would also agree that concepts must at some point relate to intuitions; the question then is what we are to make of Kant's statement at B309 where he does indeed say that concepts without intuitions are still something.

But, if we turn to B309 in *CPR* we find that Kant is, in fact, here talking about *pure* concepts (categories) and not empirical ones. Kant does say that if we abstract all thinking through categories from our intuitions then no cognition of an object remains. Then he says that even if we remove intuition, we are still left with the form of thought. In this way the “categories extend further than sensible intuition” (B309). “But”, Kant continues, “they do not thereby determine a greater sphere of objects, since one cannot assume that such objects can be given without presupposing that another kind of intuition than the sensible kind is possible, which, however, we are by no means justified in doing” (B309). It should first be noted that in *WWR*, Schopenhauer presents Kant’s statement as being about empirical, not pure, concepts. This is clear from when he says that concepts are derived and abstracted from empirical intuitions by omitting all that is inessential to the intuition (Schopenhauer, *WWR* 1, 2010, p. 503). Only empirical concepts can be derived from intuitions in the manner described by Schopenhauer, not pure concepts, which cannot be derived from experience at all. Thus, what Kant is, in fact, saying is that the form of thought remains even if there is no sensible data. But, the form of thought cannot on that account be used by itself to cognize any objects. Kant does claim that pure concepts without intuitions are something, but, that they merely constitute contentless form which, by themselves, can never determine an object. The form of thought exists regardless of whether content fills the form or not. It is true that form must have content in order for us to have cognition of an object, but what Kant seems to be saying is that the forms of thought which order any content must be present in the understanding prior to the content being added. A second point to be raised against Schopenhauer in this respect is that in the same section of *CPR* (Phenomena and Noumena) as that which Schopenhauer quotes, Kant in fact goes so far as to say that the categories have less significance than the forms of intuition (space and time).⁹⁶ Thus, we find at least one part of Schopenhauer’s criticism of Kant’s account of concepts to be misplaced.

⁹⁶ Kant says at B306, merely 3 pages before the passage quoted by Schopenhauer, that the

Let us now consider Schopenhauer's account of the possibility of non-conceptual cognition. The problem with Schopenhauer's account, I believe, is a conflation between non-conceptual knowledge and theoretical/scientific knowledge. Schopenhauer seems to assume that not possessing theoretical/scientific knowledge of something implies knowing something non-conceptually – a conflation which I believe is both unfounded and accounts for Schopenhauer's use of somewhat odd examples in support of his arguments. As Janaway claims, Schopenhauer believes that perception is "non-conceptual, non-propositional, non-judgmental, non-language-dependent, non theoretical" but that there is no reason to treat all these as entailing one another (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 163). This conflation by Schopenhauer is visible in the two examples we considered earlier regarding a practiced billiards player's knowledge of elastic bodies compared to that of a scientist, or again my own lack of theoretical knowledge about the angle at which I need to press my razor against my face, despite the relative ease with which I do this intuitively. It is true that we possess theoretical knowledge of things through concepts, and that such knowledge is a product of drawing inferences between judgments. However, this is completely different from the subsumption of intuitions under concepts which gives rise to ordinary experience. When I see, and therefore experience, a book on the table, my experience of it as a book can only be possible through an application of concepts to the manifold of intuition with which I am presented. Furthermore, this unification of the manifold of intuition under conceptual forms must occur judgmentally; I must, for example, be able to think of whatever I am being presented with as a substance in which accidents inhere (at the transcendental level). This does not, however, imply that I possess theoretical knowledge of my object. Rather, it means that without such concept application, I would merely be confronted with a wide

categories are "nothing other than **forms of thought**, which contain merely the logical capacity for unifying the manifold given in intuition in a consciousness *a priori*; thus if one takes away from them the only possible intuition possible for us, they have even less significance than those pure sensible forms" (B306).

array of sensations wholly incapable of being delineated and classified into separate objects. When Schopenhauer claims that all we need for cognition of objects is the application of the law of causality to our sensations, one may be tempted to ask: without concepts, how could we even begin to pick out and delineate an object from the manifold of intuition? How could we go from all the different sensations that we are having to being able to posit the book as the cause of the sensations of red, squareness, etc., and judge that the sensations of dark brown next to the red (say the spine of the book) are included in the object whereas the light brown colour (the table) engulfing both the red and dark brown is part of *another object* which is causing sensations in me? How could such delineation be possible unless we subsumed intuitions under concepts in our ordinary experience? We may turn this reflection to Schopenhauer's example of the practiced billiards player. Just because the billiards player does not know the laws of mechanics governing the movement of bodies does not mean that he is operating non-conceptually when he plays a game of billiards. For example, if the billiards player was genuinely operating non-conceptually, how could he know which ball was the cue ball and which ones the baulk colours. Even more minimally, he would not even know where the ball finished and where the table or cloth began. Implicit in Schopenhauer's position seems to be the assumption that the world presents itself as already delineated and separated into individuated objects; a position which seems more of a retreat to an empiricist account of experience than a transcendental one. Likewise, the billiard player's acquaintance with the movement of bodies seems more like knowledge through acquaintance than non-conceptual knowledge. In order to have this intuitive knowledge, as Schopenhauer calls it, it would seem the player must still function with concepts (such as that of ball, hardness, elasticity, straight line, etc.) but that he has learnt the *behaviour* of what these concepts apply to through repeated practice and never formally deduced the quantitative laws which govern them. Thus, it is not that intuitive knowledge is non-conceptual, but rather

that it is non-theoretical and non-scientific, and Schopenhauer's big mistake was to equate, or at least assume a logical entailment between, the two.

The disagreement between Kant and Schopenhauer on the role of concepts in minimal experience is given an incisive treatment by Guyer who locates the difference between the two as arising out of a misunderstanding of Kant by Schopenhauer regarding the role of intuitions. According to Guyer, Schopenhauer seems to read Kant as saying that at the level of mere intuitions we have a form of consciousness of objects – or put simply, we are presented with an object. Schopenhauer says: “What the eye, the ear, the hand senses is not an intuition: it is merely data. Only when the understanding proceeds from the effect back to the cause is the world present in intuition” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 33). That Schopenhauer says that the world is present in intuition is highly supportive of Guyer's claim for it indicates that Schopenhauer thought that we are, at the level of intuitions, conscious of a world of objects. This goes back to Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant at A50/B74 where Kant is, according to Schopenhauer, inconsistently claiming both that an object is given to us in intuition and that we only have experience of an object after we have applied concepts to our intuitions. But, once again, as in B309, we find that Schopenhauer's criticism is really down to a misunderstanding of Kant. Kant says, at A50/B74, that:

“Our cognition arises from two logical sources in the mind, the first of which is the reception of representations [...] the second the faculty for cognizing an object by means of these representations [...]; through the former an object is given to us, through the latter it is thought in relation to that representation [...] neither concepts without intuition corresponding to them in some way nor intuition without concepts can yield a cognition” (A50/B74).

Admittedly, this passage may make it seem as if Schopenhauer's criticism is correct and that Kant is assuming that at the level of intuitions we have a certain form of consciousness of objects which then through being subsumed under concepts gives rise to some other form of consciousness of objects which Kant calls cognition (Guyer, 1999, p. 116). Thus, Schopenhauer seems to equate intuitions having PSR applied to them with perceptions and takes perception to be a state in which we have some form of consciousness of objects. We must admit that Kant's wording in this passage is rather unfortunate and potentially confusing, but when Kant says that through intuitions an object is given to us, he does not mean that we have consciousness of it as an object. His point is in fact far simpler and all it amounts to is the claim that the raw material required for us to experience an object is provided us from without in intuitions (through the affection of our sensibility) – a position which we have shown that Schopenhauer himself must wholly agree with. We do not, according to Kant, have any form of consciousness of an object through mere intuitions. Rather, any form of consciousness, experience, or cognition which we have of an *object* already presupposes the unification of intuitions under concepts; or to put it differently, "our conscious recognition of any object already involves a synthesis of intuitions in accordance with concepts" (Guyer, 1999, p. 115).

Despite the preceding counter-criticism of Schopenhauer, I believe there still seems to be something both valid and highly interesting about what he is drawing attention to. However, it is my contention that the alleged non-conceptual knowledge which, for example, the billiards player possesses is not regarding outer objects, but rather regarding his own body. Thus, I believe that it is in Schopenhauer's account of the world as Will, that is, his account of our acquaintance with our own bodies, where Schopenhauer seems to have a very strong case for a non-conceptual *element* being present in ordinary experience – ordinary experience itself being predominantly conceptual. We may, for example, ask: why is it that the scientist, despite possessing all the relevant theoretical knowledge about the angles and forces required to pot a given ball, will undoubtedly have less success in

doing so than the experienced billiards player? The answer, I believe, is that it is his lack of acquaintance with his *own body*; namely how to maintain his bridge, how to jerk his other arm in applying, say, back spin to the cue ball, etc. It is no use knowing that I must apply n amount of force to the cue ball unless I know what n amounts to in terms of how hard I actually hit the cue ball. Thus, it seems that it is the acquaintance we have with our own bodies, or more specifically, the acquaintance we have with ‘force’ through the movements of our own bodies which appears to elude the traditional classification of conceptual experience.⁹⁷ Importantly, however, I believe that such experience of our own bodies, which we may be tempted to label non-conceptual, is not in some sense primary to conceptual experience; it rather *presupposes*, and is *premised on*, a world of conceptual outer objects. The billiards player who is deciding on how hard to strike the cue ball, and how much force to apply to his bridging hand to maintain it steady, makes his decision based on being presented with a billiards table, a cloth of a certain texture, billiard balls that have a certain shape and weight, etc. Thus, he finds himself in a conceptually determined world wherein an aspect of his acquaintance with his own body is, arguably, non-conceptual. It is not, however, the case, as Schopenhauer claims, that the world is most minimally, or originally, presented to us as being non-conceptual.

To summarize, we find that Schopenhauer’s attempted revision of Kant has failed to engender a viable coherent alternative theory to that of the former. Even commentators sympathetic to Schopenhauer’s enterprise seem to disagree with Schopenhauer on his criticism of Kant regarding the possibility of non-conceptual knowledge. As Janaway says: “according to Schopenhauer, there can be entirely concept-free presentation to the mind of a particular or collection of particulars – a view that is open to the objection that experience of particulars is always of them as particular instances of some concept”

⁹⁷ In WWR 1, §17, Schopenhauer mentions the limits the concepts of ‘natural forces’ as indicating the limits of science – the points where scientific explanations stop and simply aver natural forces as givens. He then draws attention to the dual way in which we know our own bodies; that is, as representation and as will and wants to show that we have, through the acquaintance with our own bodies as Will, a sort of acquaintance with the concept of force which we cannot have in the world as representation (see WWR 1, §18).

(Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 165). The idea that without concepts we can never have cognition of any particular is also found in the writings of Schopenhauer's contemporary and philosophical arch-rival, Hegel. In the first chapter to his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel attempts to show how non-conceptual cognition of a particular inevitably and invariably leads to cognition of a universal – a position much more in line with Kant's than Schopenhauer's.⁹⁸ However, we also found that Schopenhauer's position did seem to have some plausibility with regards to our knowledge of our own bodies, and that he may be viewed here as a forerunner for later debates in philosophy regarding the possibility of non-conceptual experience.⁹⁹ One person, in particular, upon whom Schopenhauer's analysis of non-conceptual cognition is thought to have made a significant influence, is Nietzsche. However, as we consider Nietzsche's early notebook writings, we will see that on this very issue Nietzsche seems to hold a far more Kantian position than may have been assumed. Although he is acutely aware of Schopenhauer's position, it is one which he criticizes in his notebooks. For now, however, we merely want to demonstrate the criticisms of Kant made by Schopenhauer and their relative success or failure.

3. Schopenhauer on Empirical Reality

The last issue to consider is the difference between Kant and Schopenhauer's views on empirical reality. The question which I wish to consider is: what exactly are Schopenhauer's views regarding the reality of the world as appearance, or, what is the same, the empirical world? We saw, in Chapter 2: 2, how Kant draws a fourfold distinction between transcendental ideality/reality and empirical ideality/reality. The important lesson in Kant,

⁹⁸ See the opening chapter of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, on Sense-Certainty.

⁹⁹ See, for example: Poellner, *Non-Conceptual Content, Experience and the Self*, 2003.

if we recollect, was that empirical reality, though a reality which consists wholly in being phenomenal, that is appearance, is not on that account illusory in any sense. Empirical reality is simply necessarily the way objects must be if they are to be objects for us at all. Kant did not wish to devalue our empirical knowledge of the world in any way; in fact, the *CPR* is, along with other purposes, intended to vindicate the certainty of scientific knowledge – not undermine it. We must now turn to Schopenhauer to see what he believes are the consequences of transcendental idealism. What is interesting in the case of Schopenhauer is that we find him both endorsing and objecting to Kant's view of the reality of the empirical world and it leaves Schopenhauer with a rather ambivalent attitude towards the type of reality assigned to the world of appearance.

We may begin by considering passages where Schopenhauer seems to very much adhere to the non-illusory, yet transcendently ideal, status of empirical reality as expressed by Kant. Fairly early on in *WWR* we find a passage where Schopenhauer seems to wholly and unreservedly subscribe to Kant's position regarding the non-illusory status of the world as appearance or representation. "The world is exactly as it presents itself and it presents itself completely and without reserve as representation, held together by the law of causality. This is its empirical reality" (Schopenhauer, *WWR* 1, 2010, p. 36). Schopenhauer is highlighting here that the world, or, what is the same, objects, can only become known (they can only be objects) by being objects of knowledge which means possessing the determinations which lie *a priori* in our minds. That Schopenhauer uses the phrasing 'without reserve' indicates that he sees the world of representation (mediated by certain *a priori* determinations of the subject) as something from which we cannot escape, and simply the way that objects *must be* if they are to be objects for us. Thus, it would make little sense from this perspective to claim that these objects are illusory, if their 'true' being is, through the very requirements of cognition, unknowable. "On the purely *objective* path, we never attain to the inner nature of things, but if we attempt to find their inner nature from outside and empirically, this inner always becomes an outer in our hands"

(Schopenhauer, WWR 2, 1958, pp. 273-4). It should first be noted that given Schopenhauer's disagreement with Kant regarding the latter's way of arriving at the thought of things-in-themselves as the grounds of appearances, this seems a rather odd position for Schopenhauer to hold. The quote indicates that he believes appearances to have an 'inside' which would constitute their essence as things-in-themselves. Regardless, it is straightforward enough to discern what he intends. What Schopenhauer is drawing attention to is that as soon as we wish to know, or even think, things-in-themselves, we inevitably end up doing so through *our* cognition which separates us from what things would be like in and of themselves. Thus, he says that as soon as we wish to know the inside of things, this inside turns under our hands, into an outside again (Ibid.) implying that whenever we try to handle, or cognize, the thing, we are invariably stuck in the phenomenal realm. Now, Schopenhauer *does* seem to believe that there is a way in which we may know some things 'inwardly', namely the will, and this gives us access to the thing-in-itself. I shall not say much on Schopenhauer's arguments for this other than two points which, I believe, are worth mentioning. Firstly, we should note that once Schopenhauer locates the Will as the essence of the world, he argues that because in the noumenal realm there is neither space nor time, there can likewise be no individuation; for individuation requires the co-existence of space and time. From this, Schopenhauer concludes that there are no things-in-themselves, but rather just a single non-individuated thing-in-itself which is the will. The problem with this argument, however, as should be clear from our discussion on Kant, is that it assumes the validity of Kant's ontological denial of space and time from the noumenal realm (Guyer, 1999, p. 106) – a position which is marred by difficulty. Secondly, the knowledge we have of ourselves as Will is always governed by inner sense and therefore mediated by time, which means that it is still knowledge within the realm of appearance. This is a point which even Schopenhauer tacitly acknowledged, which ultimately led him to claim that our knowledge of ourselves as will was not strictly speaking knowledge of the thing-in-itself, but rather that here our knowledge was only covered by

“the thinnest of veils” (Janaway, *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*, 1989, p. 196)¹⁰⁰; a position which is susceptible to far more objections.

If we return to our original quote from WWR section 5, we may however see why Schopenhauer adheres to the Kantian claim that the world is necessarily appearance. Further down on the same page he continues: “The entire world of objects is, and remains, representation; and precisely because of this, it is and will always be thoroughly conditioned by the subject, that is: the world has transcendental ideality. But this is also why the world is not a lie or an illusion: it presents itself as what it is, as representation [...]” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 36).

Despite Schopenhauer’s claim above, we also find in WWR several examples where he seems to take up a completely contrary position. Unlike Kant, who maintained that knowledge of the thing-in-itself is impossible for beings with our form of sensibility, Schopenhauer went so far as to claim that we *can* know the thing-in-itself. Once it has been established that knowledge of the true essence of the world is attainable, it is easy to see how Schopenhauer will want to proceed to use this as the benchmark for true non-illusory knowledge and label all other empirical knowledge illusory. But, surely, Schopenhauer must now withdraw his other statement which says that the world “presents itself *completely* and *without reserve* as representation” (Ibid., my emphases). For clearly, we have a situation where the world, putatively, presents itself as thing-in-itself (or at least so Schopenhauer seems to claim). Schopenhauer could be ridded of this seeming contradiction by claiming that in this one instance, the subject knows himself as subject and not as object. As an object he may be said to be part of the world and if the subject’s knowledge of the essence of himself as will is knowledge of himself as object then clearly the world does not present itself without reserve as representation. If, on the other hand, this knowledge is knowledge which the subject has of himself as subject, then Schopenhauer is perhaps not wedded to contradiction, for the subject is not part of the

¹⁰⁰ Note that Payne translates this as “lightest of all veils” (Schopenhauer, WWR 2, 1958, pp. 197-8).

world but rather its necessary correlate. There are even times when he seems close to adopting this position but stops short.¹⁰¹ Three problems arise with this position. The first is that it is quite unclear what it would mean for the subject to know itself *as subject*. At least within Schopenhauer's definitions of subject, object, cognition, etc. one could perhaps claim that the claim is meaningless. This brings us to the second point which is that Schopenhauer, as we argued earlier, maintains that the subject of knowledge can never be known; "The *subject* is the seat of all cognition but is itself not cognized by anything" and it is that which is "presupposed as the general condition of all appearances" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 25). The third, more general, problem is that knowledge of ourselves as will is nonetheless mediated by time meaning that it is still knowledge of the world of appearance. Taking these points together, it seems that Schopenhauer cannot consistently maintain that the world is always representation *and* that there is a way through which we can access the thing-in-itself. However, consistent or not, Schopenhauer *does* maintain both positions, and he claims that, because of the possibility of knowledge of the thing-in-itself, our ordinary experience (whether ordinary cognition or abstract knowledge) is in some sense illusory. In fact, he opens his discussion on Kant in the Appendix to WWR by comparing what Kant discovered to the teachings of Plato, namely that "this world that appears to the senses does not have true being, but is instead only an incessant becoming, it is and is not, and apprehending it does not involve cognition so much as delusion" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 445). He goes on to locate the presence of this line of thought in eastern philosophy as well, such as the Vedas and the Puranas where the world of experience is said to be separated from its true essence by the veil of Maya. The presentation of the world as illusory and humans as being separated from its true essence by a veil is captured in a passage from early on in WWR; "It is *Maya*, the veil of deception

¹⁰¹ He says, for example, that the subject of willing is a special class of objects and that here the "object coincides with the subject, i.e. ceases to be an object" and calls this coinciding, the "miracle *par excellence*" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 122). A few pages down he says that the will "announces itself immediately and in such a way that subject and object are not distinguished with *complete clarity*" (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 134, emphasis mine).

that covers the eyes of mortals and lets them see a world that cannot be described as either being or not being: for it is like a dream; like sunlight reflected off sand that a distant traveler mistakes for water, or like a discarded rope that the traveler thinks is a snake (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 28). What is interesting about this passage is that Schopenhauer is describing empirical reality in exactly the kind of vocabulary that Kant would use to describe empirical *illusion*. He compares the status of our knowledge of empirical objects to that of a mirage. What is more is that he even seems to claim that this is the lesson of the Kantian philosophy and its greatest value. Back in the Appendix he says that “This sort of knowledge and calm, level-headed presentation of the dream-like constitution of the whole world is really the basis for the whole of Kant’s philosophy, it is its soul and its very greatest merit” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 446). Kant would undoubtedly protest against this characterization of his philosophy, and rightly so. Despite his thorough acquaintance with Kant, Schopenhauer’s quote seems rather similar to Garve’s review of *CPR* whereby Kant’s transcendental idealism was assimilated to the common conception of Berkeley’s idealism. But Schopenhauer was extremely well versed in Kant’s philosophy and his claims regarding the illusory status of empirical reality cannot have been down to lack of insight or knowledge of Kant, as becomes evident when one compares these statements to those at WWR 1, §5, p. 36 where he seemingly affirms the reality of the empirical world (quoted above). It seems that Schopenhauer’s talk about the illusory status of the world is more down to a *demand* that we should be able to know more than the restrictive field of the sciences. That is, it appears to be Schopenhauer’s own dissatisfaction with knowledge according to a principle (PSR) which is wholly phenomenal and which always leaves something unexplained that fuels his talk about representations as illusory.¹⁰² Or perhaps it is the use which he wishes to make of our apparent knowledge of the will as thing-in-itself in the realm of ethics and morality which guides him to such considerations. Which of these it is that is guiding Schopenhauer is at this point merely

¹⁰² See: Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, pp. 107-8.

speculative and remains outside the scope and intentions of the present work. What *is* clear, however, is that Schopenhauer does not succeed in reaching this position through a systematic and coherent criticism of certain deficiencies in Kant's philosophy. Whatever consideration led him to label our knowledge of empirical reality illusory seem to be exogenous to and independent of the coherence of Kant's arguments.

Conclusion

As we have seen, Schopenhauer's version of Transcendental Idealism diverges from Kant's in certain fundamental respects. Specifically, Schopenhauer presents an account of experience which attempts to overcome Kant's problematic inference to things-in-themselves via the PSR. He, furthermore, argued for a conception of experience which, most minimally, is allegedly non-conceptual.

As I have wished to demonstrate, Schopenhauer's arguments for both of these claims fail to stand up to criticisms which may be levelled against them from a Kantian position. However, although I have been quite dismissive of Schopenhauer's revisions to Kant, I believe that, despite his inability to resolve these issues and incorporate them into a coherent whole, his criticisms are insightful and point to areas in Kant's CPR which do not stand on sound legs. Thus, his criticism of Kant's inference to a thing-in-itself is one which, though difficult to overcome, certainly seems to be a valid concern. Indeed, Schopenhauer shares his general suspicion of the very concept of the thing-in-itself with his self-proclaimed philosophical rivals – namely, the German Idealists. More importantly, for the purposes of our study, his arguments made a lasting impression on Nietzsche who until his late period grappled with the concept of the thing-in-itself (Chapter 9). Furthermore, Schopenhauer's thoughts on non-conceptual cognition also recur in Nietzsche's thoughts and most importantly, the former's claims regarding the illusoriness of the empirical world

are ones which are traditionally thought to have greatly influenced Nietzsche's sceptical epistemological claims.

PART THREE: EARLY NIETZSCHE

Introduction

This part of our study will look at Nietzsche's thoughts on epistemology as contained in his notebook writings from the early 1870s. What is remarkable about Nietzsche's epistemological concerns during his early period is that they are almost solely restricted to his notebooks. The most important piece of writing from this early period containing a range of thoughts on metaphysics and epistemology is *On Truth and Lie in an Extra-moral Sense*. The paper has received its fair share of scholarly attention, but it is my contention that the depth of Nietzsche's assertion to the effect that experience falsifies reality has not quite been appreciated by commentators. I believe that too much emphasis has been attached to Nietzsche's claims which seem to endorse a metaphysical correspondence view of truth – much like Schopenhauer does at times in WWR. This has furthermore been done at the expense of engaging with his criticism of the role of the concept in experience. I believe that although Nietzsche seems to put forward arguments of both kinds in TL, through corroborating with his notebooks of the same period, we find that his 'error theory' is really only contained in the second strand of criticism. What is more interesting, and which has also been often overlooked in much of the literature, is the extent to which the various arguments deployed by Nietzsche in TL have their roots in basic concerns and problems inherent in the doctrine of transcendental idealism. Although in his early period Nietzsche may not be a transcendental idealist, *tout court*, he is very much someone who takes certain assumptions of the tradition almost for granted, builds on these foundations, and undermines other basic tenets; that is, his concerns *grow out of* problems that he locates within transcendental idealism. Indeed, one cannot truly appreciate Nietzsche's concerns in this period – concerns which I believe followed him throughout his productive

life – without seeing how they have their roots in Kant and the transcendental tradition.¹⁰³

Thus, we will see how the issues which plagued Kant and Schopenhauer in Parts One and Two, reappear in many of Nietzsche's remarks on knowledge. Indeed, some of Nietzsche's concerns (particularly in *TL*) are the results of a direct engagement with thinkers within the transcendental tradition such as Kant, Schopenhauer, Lange, and Spir.

I will argue that Nietzsche's critique of knowledge tackles the 'justification' and 'truth' components of knowledge as classically conceived. The first strand of criticism, dealing with the problem of justification, broadly addresses issues arising from Kant's Transcendental Aesthetic in CPR. These include Kant's ontological denial of space, Jacobi's criticism of Kant, and the transcendental vs empirical ideality debate. This line of thought, whereby Nietzsche adopts a metaphysical correspondence view of truth, has also been predominant in exegeses and analyses of *TL*. After considering the arguments from justification, I wish, through cross-referencing Nietzsche's notebooks, to demonstrate why I believe that it is unclear whether he subscribes to a metaphysical correspondence view of truth. The key to understanding this will be to consider Nietzsche's views on what the transcendently ideal status of the world implies regarding its empirical reality/ideality. We will find that, on this issue, Nietzsche is ambivalent and at times takes up contradicting positions.

The second strand of criticism, on the other hand, targets the 'truth' component of knowledge. Nietzsche is now concerned with showing that our 'truths'¹⁰⁴ actually falsify reality. This line of thought focuses on problems resulting from the application of concepts to intuitions (or primary impressions as Nietzsche calls them). But given our previous argument that Nietzsche does not use metaphysical truth as the benchmark for truth, we must now consider what criterion Nietzsche is employing. After considering Nietzsche's

¹⁰³ As George Stack phrases it: "Despite his sarcastic remarks about Kant, Nietzsche's basic approach to the problem of knowledge is indebted to Kant" (Stack, 1983, p. 16).

¹⁰⁴ Throughout *TL* and Nietzsche's early notebooks, whenever he speaks of 'our truths' he is speaking about our putative knowledge claims; or more specifically, beliefs which we take to be justified and true.

critique of the concept in experience, I will look at the obstacles he faces in wanting to jettison the concept. This will be done through a discussion of Kant's Transcendental Deduction and will then require a clarification of Nietzsche's position on the possibility/impossibility of non-conceptual cognition in relation to Kant and Schopenhauer. I will argue that Nietzsche's critique of the concept is not an endorsement of the possibility of non-conceptual cognition but rather that the impossibility of non-conceptual experience is precisely the reason why Nietzsche sees the concept as *inevitably* falsifying reality. This position, however, leaves Nietzsche open to the charge that his argument for falsification is in a sense 'trivial' insofar as he must adopt an inaccessible benchmark as the criterion of truth.

Taking all these different lines of thought into account, I hope to show not only that Nietzsche's attack is more multi-faceted than has previously been suggested, but also that his arguments are susceptible to criticisms which have hitherto been overlooked. I will finish Part Three with just such a consideration whereby I shall argue that both Kant and Nietzsche's accounts of empirical concept formation, leave their positions open to an argument which undermines the objective validity of empirical concepts.

CHAPTER 6: Nietzsche and Transcendental Idealism

Introduction

In this first chapter of Part Three, I will look at Nietzsche's early epistemology as found in his notebook writings of the late 1860s-early 1870s, focusing on the traditional reading of these texts as revealing a commitment on Nietzsche's part to a metaphysical correspondence view of truth. I wish to demonstrate that, insofar as Nietzsche proposes such arguments, his acceptance of the neglected alternative indicates that these are meant to undermine the recognisable justifiability of empirical knowledge. I will then re-visit the transcendental vs empirical ideality debate to demonstrate why Nietzsche seems undecided on the issue of whether the reality of appearances comes under sceptical doubt because of a lack of guarantee of correspondence to the thing-in-itself. What we will find

then is that Nietzsche's 'error theory' is to be found in his treatment of the role of the concept in experience – a topic for Chapter 7.

1. Metaphysical Correspondence

The most common interpretation of Nietzsche's epistemology in TL is something along the lines of a correspondence view of truth whereby phenomenal reality is either false because it fails to correspond to metaphysical truth, or that we simply cannot be justified in believing that it corresponds to the latter. This view is traditionally and originally ascribed to Arthur Danto's influential 1965 book *Nietzsche as Philosopher*. But it has been brought to attention by scholars like Wilcox that the term 'correspondence' has assumed many variegated meanings throughout the history of philosophy, or that at least there are many different versions of the 'correspondence theory' of truth, and that as such, any talk of Nietzsche endorsing a correspondence view of truth ought to explicitly make clear and define the term 'correspondence'.¹⁰⁵ Donald Davidson states the correspondence theory, in summary, as the theory that "the property of being true is to be explained by a relation between a statement and something else" (Davidson, 1969, p. 748). This 'something else' is then to be explained somehow in terms of 'facts', 'state of affairs in the world', etc. In Nietzsche scholarship, the correspondence view is often taken as the relation of resemblance between my perception and some objective world order. But, as Wilcox is quick to point out, what does it mean to say that my perception resembles the objective order? For example, my perception that 'snow is white' does not resemble snow in the sense that my perception is neither 'white' nor 'frozen' (Wilcox, 1986, p. 344). Likewise, there is a temptation to think of our perception as an image of reality. But this temptation should likewise be resisted as the analogy breaks down when it comes to verification. For

¹⁰⁵ See Wilcox, 1986, pp. 340-2.

example, to check the accuracy of a photograph, I may compare it to the original which it is meant to capture and look for similarities and dissimilarities. However, in the case of my perception, there is nothing to which I may compare my perception, except to my perception at a different time. But, in trying to make sense of how Danto uses the term correspondence in explaining Nietzsche's theory, Wilcox gives a formulation of the correspondence theory as it is attributed to Nietzsche which I believe essentially captures the predominant view within the literature about what relation it is that Nietzsche is drawing attention to. Wilcox says that if we take truth to refer to transcendent or metaphysical truth, or, to speak in the language of transcendental idealism, as the grounds of our empirical knowledge, and if we furthermore hold that these grounds are in themselves unknowable, then Nietzsche's correspondence theory is something along the lines that we "have no knowledge or truth about the causes of our perceptions" (Wilcox, 1986, p. 344). This is, crudely, the version of correspondence which I shall consider as relating to Nietzsche's claims. I shall argue below that to the extent that Nietzsche proposes such arguments, these are concerned not with the truth of our knowledge claims, but rather with their justifiability. However, ultimately I believe that Nietzsche, in his notebooks, displays a reticence towards adopting metaphysical truth as the benchmark, meaning that not only is he not attempting through his arguments to demonstrate that our truths are illusory, but he is not even claiming that they *may* be illusory; that is, Nietzsche is neither arguing for the falsification of empirical truth resulting from a lack of correspondence to metaphysical truth nor is it clear that he is proposing a form of scepticism whereby our inability to know whether the former is congruent with the latter *undermines* the status of empirical knowledge.

2. Nietzsche in Relation to Kant and Schopenhauer

Nietzsche starts TL with a consideration of language as a social phenomenon arising out of man's need to rise out of a Hobbesian state of the *bellum omnium contra omnes* (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 81). Nietzsche provides us with a story of how he believes the need for language and the establishing of fixed designations for things arises amongst humans. The epistemology of TL, then, begins when Nietzsche turns to consider the status of words, both what they relate to and what its users *take words* to relate to. His preoccupation now *seems* to be whether our words capture, or carry some form of resemblance or correspondence to, things-in-themselves. The question is whether the conventional predications we make about things – the initial meaning of truth – relate to truths in the metaphysical sense. Nietzsche believes that people ordinarily *do* take words to designate things in the world in and of itself, so a related question that emerges is *how* humans have come to adopt this view. For Nietzsche, such a posture must be the result of a form of forgetfulness on the part of man regarding how words came into being. Only by forgetting the origin of that which is considered 'existent', does man reach the point where he believes that his designations correspond to things in the world in and of itself.

To understand this point, we must look at what a 'word' really is. Nietzsche claims that a word is the "copy in sound of a nerve stimulus" (Ibid.). The word is first created when we receive some nerve stimuli which produce an image in us.¹⁰⁶ This Nietzsche calls the first metaphor. To the image we then prescribe a name (a word) – the second metaphor. Nietzsche calls these metaphors because at each step what we are actually confronted with is meant to serve as a representation for something else; the image is a presumed visual representation of the nerve stimuli and, likewise, the word is an auditory representation of

¹⁰⁶ By image, Nietzsche presumably means something which carries, or *which we believe to carry*, some form of qualitative resemblance to the thing.

the image.¹⁰⁷ But this means that between our representations (whether it is a word, an image, or even the nerve stimuli) and the thing-in-itself (the ground of the nerve stimuli) there seems to be an epistemic gap over which we cannot leap. Nietzsche compares the status of *our* truths to the knowledge the deaf person has of sound from observing Chladni's sand figures (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 82). The deaf person, upon seeing the patterns in the sand caused by the string vibrations, "will now swear that he must know what men mean by 'sound'" (Ibid.). Much like the sand figures, our representation is a mere remnant of the thing-in-itself and only captures its effects and not the original entity. "In the same way that the sound appears as a sand figure, so the mysterious X of the thing in itself first appears as a nerve stimulus, then as an image, and finally as a sound" (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 83)

According to Clark, Nietzsche's argument above is the result of his criterion of metaphysical correspondence as constitutive of truth coupled with a representational theory of perception (Clark, 1990, p. 77). In this respect Nietzsche follows the transcendental tradition of Kant and Schopenhauer insofar as both of them endorsed a form of representationalism whereby what we are aware of cannot be qualitatively identical with the nature of things as they are in themselves. Of course, as we saw in the previous two chapters, Kant and Schopenhauer disagreed over what exactly we are permitted to say about the nature of the world in and of itself, or if we are allowed to even posit such a nature as the ground of our sensations, and about whether our knowledge of phenomena implies illusoriness. A recap of the conclusions of Kant and Schopenhauer's theories will help illuminate Nietzsche's position in *TL*.

We saw in Part One that Kant draws the distinction between things as they are in themselves, and these very same things as they make their appearances for us in experience, and claims that what we are aware of is always the latter and never the

¹⁰⁷ Of course, we may ask what exactly it means for an image to be a representation of the nerve stimuli; that is, perhaps what Nietzsche *ought* to have said is that the word is a representation of *that which causes* the nerve stimuli.

former.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, in the *Aesthetic*, Kant believed to have established the sensible conditions of experience, that is, the *a priori* forms of intuition to which an object must conform if it is to become an object of experience. Kant also argued for why he thought that the *a priori* status of our intuitions of space and time means that these intuitions have their source in us as subjects, and therefore do not pertain to things-in-themselves. In the Conclusions to the expositions he states: “Space represents no property at all of any things in themselves nor any relation of them to each other, i.e., no determination of them that attaches to objects themselves and that would remain even if one were to abstract from all subjective conditions of intuitions” (A26/B42). Thus, Kant is *specifically excluding* space (and time) from the properties of things-in-themselves meaning that he believes there to be a definitive difference between things as they are in and of themselves and as they appear to us as phenomena. His reasoning for this, as was argued for in Chapter 2: 3.2, was contained in the transcendental exposition of space, whereby our possession of certain *a priori* apodictic truths about the science of space, Kant believed, specifically excluded spatiality from being a property of things-in-themselves. However, we also saw in Chapter 2: 3.3, that Kant’s ontological denial of space ultimately failed. Kant, I argued, was unable to overcome Trendelenburg’s neglected alternative, *not* for the reasons that Trendelenburg provided, because as we saw the argument from geometry *does* take this possibility into account, but rather because of Kant’s reliance on the *a priori* truth of geometrical propositions – geometry having been shown to be *a posteriori*. However, regardless of this failure, what we are interested in is the distinction which Kant *believed* he had successfully established between things-in-themselves and appearances and how he believed to have definitely shown that we can be certain that there is a difference between the two.

As we saw in Part Two, Schopenhauer’s theory, though it diverges from Kant’s in certain fundamental respects, nonetheless grows out of the latter’s philosophy. For

¹⁰⁸ As argued for in chapter 1, I shall follow a (one-world) view reading of Kant’s distinction between things-in-themselves and appearances. According to my reading, the one-world view is fully compatible with Kant’s claim that things-in-themselves ground appearances (c.f. Ch. 2: 4).

Schopenhauer, what we perceive through the senses is “there only as representation, that is, only in reference to another thing, namely, that which represents” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 23). The truth of idealism, he believes, is guaranteed through the fact that to be an object can coherently only mean to be an object *for a subject*.¹⁰⁹ Thus, what we are aware of are never things-in-themselves, but rather whatever we have as an object, is only ever an object *for us*, which is to say it is only ever a representation.¹¹⁰ But if the object or representation is determined by *a priori* determinants of the subject’s intellect, then it would seem highly improbable, Schopenhauer claims, that the world as it is in and of itself would just so happen to be structured along these very same determinants. “One must be forsaken by all the gods to imagine that the world [is] [...] governed at each step by the law of causality that is without exception, but in all these respects merely observing laws that we are able to state prior to all experience thereof” (Schopenhauer, On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason, 1974, §21, p. 76).

Nietzsche’s claim that words are metaphors must be seen as descending from this transcendently idealist line of thought whereby he subscribes to a representationalist theory of perception. However, as we shall see in the next section, Nietzsche draws an epistemologically more modest conclusion from his representationalist theory of perception than did Kant and Schopenhauer. We find in Nietzsche’s early notebooks, arguments directed against both Kant and Schopenhauer for their ontological denials of phenomenal properties from the world in and of itself.

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter 4: 1.

¹¹⁰ N.B. Schopenhauer takes these two terms as being interchangeable (See Ch. 4: 1).

3. The Neglected Alternative

The problem, as Nietzsche sees it, seems to be our inability to capture the thing-in-itself in our representations, or metaphors; a problem which arises through mediation of the former when it makes its appearance as a representation for a subject. This mediation is furthermore, in Nietzsche's view, an inescapable fact of cognition; it is what is required in order to know anything in any way – a point which Nietzsche reiterates numerous times in his notebooks. "As soon one wishes to *gain knowledge of* the thing in itself, *it is precisely this world –*" which one comes to know (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [146], pp. 47-8). "Knowledge", he continues, "is only possible as a reflection and by measuring oneself according to *one* standard (sensation)" (Ibid.). The reasoning behind this is that knowing must be done *through* a subject. Indeed, we cannot think of knowing something unless the knowing is done through some form of cognition – broadly speaking, the intellect. The problem with wanting to 'know' the thing-in-itself is that it is the demand to know what a thing is independently of the activity of the intellect – that is, independently of cognition. It essentially amounts to a contradictory demand, for one is desiring to know something as it is when it is not known. That Nietzsche sees the problem as one resulting from a representational theory of perception is evident when he, in summary fashion, re-iterates Schopenhauer's doctrine of the subject-dependence of objects in the following entry: "The statement: there is no knowledge without a knower or no subject without an object and no object without a subject is entirely true, but utterly trivial. We cannot say anything about the thing in itself because we have pulled the standpoint of the knower, that is, of the measurer, out from under our feet" (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [156], p. 50). Nietzsche's position here is distinctly Schopenhauerian. If we recall from Chapter 5: 3, it was Schopenhauer who claimed that "On the purely *objective* path, we never attain to the inner nature of things, but if we attempt to find their inner nature from outside and empirically, this inner always becomes an outer in our hands" (Schopenhauer, WWR 2, 1958, pp. 273-4). Now, if we

return to Kant's view on the unknowability of the thing-in-itself, we find that Kant would not have claimed that knowing the thing-in-itself is impossible *per se*, but rather that this is the case for a subject who depends for the material of experience on the receptivity of sensibility. Thus, if Nietzsche wants to claim that the thing-in-itself is necessarily unknowable, he must accept that our intuitions are sensible and that sensibility is receptive in nature.

To claim that the thing-in-itself is unknowable, is not, however, a particularly controversial claim in the transcendental tradition – indeed both Kant and Schopenhauer would agree with this (though they would both in one way or another transgress this restriction). More controversially, however, Nietzsche mentions the possibility of the viability of Trendelenburg's neglected alternative. He claims that "Against Kant we can still object, even if we accept all of his propositions, that it is still *possible* that the world is as it appears to us" (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [125], p. 42). The claim echoes Trendelenburg's formulation of the "third possibility" which Kant had allegedly overlooked. Nietzsche makes a similar criticism of Schopenhauer's account of the Will as thing-in-itself as early as 1868, in a paper entitled *On Schopenhauer*. Here one of Nietzsche's main arguments against Schopenhauer's conception of the Will is the latter's ascription of a series of negative properties to the Will. "We are compelled", he claims, "to guard against the predicates which Schopenhauer ascribes to his will, which for something simply unthinkable sound much too certain and all stem from the contradiction to the world as representation" (Ansell-Pearson & Large, 2006, p. 26). To demonstrate his point, Nietzsche quotes a passage from WWR where Schopenhauer excludes the forms of appearance (his concern being primarily with the *principium individuationis*) from the will. "The will as thing in itself [...] is quite different from its phenomenon, and is entirely free from all the forms of the phenomenon into which it first passes when it appears, and which therefore concern only its objectivity, and are foreign to the will itself. Even the most universal form of all representation, that of object for subject, does not concern it, still less the forms that are

subordinate to this and collectively have their common expression in the principle of sufficient reason. As we know time and space belong to this principle, and consequently plurality as well [...]” (Ibid.).¹¹¹ Nietzsche comments on this passage, that what surprises us about it is its “dictatorial tone, which asserts a number of *negative* characteristics of the thing in itself which lies completely outside the sphere of knowledge” (Ansell-Pearson & Large, 2006, pp. 26-7). Nietzsche’s point, both against Kant and Schopenhauer, is essentially the same as Pistorius and Trendelenburg’s charges against Kant. Most likely, it is Nietzsche’s lack of familiarity with CPR, and particularly the *Aesthetic*, which led him to overlook why Kant and Schopenhauer believed they were justified in specifically excluding certain phenomenal properties from things-in-themselves. However, for our purposes, what matters more is Nietzsche’s awareness that the acknowledgment of our inability to deny certain properties regarding things-in-themselves, has implications for the type of argument against knowledge (our truths) which can be made from a transcendently idealist line of thought.

Regarding the argument that words are metaphors (representations) for things-in-themselves, we now see that *if* Nietzsche is adopting a metaphysical correspondence view of truth, he is not arguing for the illusoriness of empirical knowledge. He rather seems to be proposing a form of scepticism regarding our ability to *know* whether our metaphors correspond to things-in-themselves or not; that is, Nietzsche is not, *yet*, proposing an argument which he believes will show that our truths are illusions; in fact, at this point in *TL* he has not yet ventured to make this claim – a claim which he only makes after having considered the role of the concept. What he is doing here, is to undermine the *justifiability* of congruence between our representations and things-in-themselves. By arguing that the X of the thing in itself, in order for it to become an object of knowledge, must make its appearance first as nerve stimuli, then as an image, and finally as a word, he has established that the object must be represented in specific forms in order for it to be an

¹¹¹ See also Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 137.

object of knowledge and experience. But he then acknowledges that he has not thereby proven that these forms in which the object is represented by us must be fundamentally different from the object as it is in itself; the possibility of congruence is left open. Thus, Nietzsche's acceptance of the possibility of the neglected alternative has a bearing on the type of argument which he is proposing regarding the status of our truths. *If* Nietzsche is adopting a metaphysical correspondence view, his acknowledgment of the possibility of the neglected alternative *must* mean that he is attacking the recognisable *justifiability* of our putative knowledge, and not its truth. His recognition of the neglected alternative, which itself is a result of his belief in the absolute unknowability of things as they are in themselves (note that in order to subscribe to Trendelenburg's alternative we must even rule out our possession of negative content-less knowledge about things-in-themselves), demonstrates why he cannot be arguing for the illusoriness of our representations because of a lack of correspondence to things-in-themselves. Essentially, Nietzsche subscribes to a strong form of agnosticism regarding the thing-in-itself which means that we cannot even know if our phenomenal knowledge fails to correspond to noumenal reality.

We should note that Nietzsche's admittance of the possibility of the neglected alternative does *not* invalidate his argument for the impossibility of knowing the thing-in-itself. For, even if Nietzsche concedes this possibility, it remains precisely that – namely, a *possibility* – nothing more. Thus, even if our empirical object is congruent with itself as it is in itself, this would merely be a contingent fact which we could never verify and therefore could also never have any justification to believe. Thus, the possibility of a correspondence between phenomena and things-in-themselves still leaves *knowledge* – on the classical definition of knowledge as recognisably justified, true, belief – of things-in-themselves beyond the reach of our cognitive capacities. We may make a claim about the empirical world, which just so happens to be true of the noumenal world as well, but this would not allow us to claim that we possess knowledge of the latter. Thus, despite the possibility of congruence, we can never know whether our metaphors correspond to things-in-

themselves or not. If we add to this that, following Schopenhauer and Kant, Nietzsche takes certain determinations (e.g. space and time) to be *a priori*, then any metaphysical truth which the belief that there are spatio-temporal objects possesses would have to depend on the mere possibility, which Schopenhauer doubted, that the world is “governed at each step by the law of causality that is without exception, but in all these respects merely observing laws that we are able to state prior to all experience thereof” (Schopenhauer, *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, 1974, §21, p. 76). That Nietzsche’s point is a sceptical one as opposed to a dogmatic claim that our truths are illusions, is demonstrated when immediately following his proposal of the neglected alternative he continues to claim that “On a personal level, moreover, this entire position is useless. No one can live in this skepticism. We must get beyond this skepticism, we must *forget* it” (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [125], p. 42).

4. The Need for the Thing-in-Itself

I now wish to consider in greater detail the Kantian and Schopenhauerian elements in *TL*. It is important to separate the Kantian from the Schopenhauerian features of Nietzsche’s thought because in so doing what emerges is the picture of someone who is firmly rooted in the transcendental tradition and who is acutely aware of the problems which are inherent in, and inimical to, different versions of the doctrine.

The first issue to consider is Nietzsche’s acknowledgement in *TL* of Jacobi’s criticism of Kant (presumably via Schopenhauer’s similar criticism in the Appendix to *WWR*). When proposing his argument for the metaphorical status of words in relation to things-in-themselves – their ontological ground – he claims “But the further inference from the nerve stimulus to a cause outside of us is already the result of a false and unjustifiable application of the principle of sufficient reason” (Nietzsche, *TL*, 1979, p. 81). Breazeale

reads this quote as evidence of Nietzsche's criticism of Schopenhauer's theory of the origin of cognition (Breazeale, 1979, p. 81n). Clark, on the other hand, believes that Nietzsche agrees with Schopenhauer's account of cognition, whereby the law of causality is applied to our sensations to give us cognition of objects. Following Breazeale, I believe this quote from *TL* demonstrates Nietzsche's awareness of Schopenhauer's failure to overcome the criticism of Kant which he levelled himself. The problem with Clark's interpretation is that she seems to be oblivious to the problem in Schopenhauer's theory. According to her reading, Nietzsche agrees with Schopenhauer regarding the origin of experience, but simply states that we are not allowed, based on sensations, to infer that there is something outside of us which grounds this representation. She believes that Schopenhauer's theory overcomes this problem because it treats sensations as *phenomenal* and therefore within the jurisdiction of the PSR. "For Schopenhauer, the inference from sensation to an external cause involves a perfectly legitimate application of the principle of causality. We infer the existence of something that exists only within the realm of experience, that is, the realm of representation" (Clark, 1990, p. 81). The problem with this position, as was demonstrated in 5: 1, is that by claiming that that which grounds the phenomenon is empirical physical bodies, Schopenhauer is having to account for the emergence of an empirical object by positing another empirical object as its ground – a position which was revealed to be circular. What I believe Nietzsche demonstrates in this section is the realisation of a necessary problem in both Kantian and Schopenhauerian transcendental idealism; namely that if we concede that we do not possess intellectual intuition, then we must also assume some form of causality beyond the phenomenal realm. This, as we know, was precisely Jacobi's criticism of Kant, but it is something which we now see is a problem which, besides Kant, was also of concern to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Thus, it seems that Nietzsche's remark is bringing attention to the fact that Schopenhauer, despite criticising Kant for this problem, likewise fails to overcome this hurdle. That Nietzsche specifically has Schopenhauer in mind here seems clear from his wording. Schopenhauer saw the role of

the understanding as applying the law of causality to sensations to present the subject with an object.¹¹² However, I do not believe that Nietzsche is merely highlighting an inconsistency which Schopenhauer's theory suffers from, but that he rather wants to demonstrate the absolute necessity of this premise in any form of transcendental idealism which relies on the passivity of sensibility for its possession of intuitions. Indeed, I believe that Nietzsche even realises this about *his own* account in this section of *TL*. For, although he raises the Jacobian problem, he seems immediately to disregard it and continues to speak about the metaphorical status of words, and even gives the example of Chladni's sand figures. In fact, Nietzsche's talk of a gap between our metaphors (representations) and things-in-themselves, that is, Nietzsche's version of the metaphysical correspondence theory, must assume a causal relation of some sort between the former and the latter. Now it should be noted that a correspondence view of truth does not of itself demand causation between some thing-in-itself and its representation by a subject. The correspondence criterion is more one of identity than one of causality; that is, in order for my representation to be true it merely has to correspond to the facts of the world – regardless of whether the facts of the world caused my representation or not. Thus, the correspondence theory does not of itself demand a causal relation between the state of affairs in the world and my representations, it rather requires a relation of identity between the two. Why then is it that Nietzsche's version of the correspondence theory seems to entail a causal relation? The answer to this seems to be Nietzsche's acceptance of a basic proposition in transcendental idealism of which, as we saw, both Kant and Schopenhauer were likewise convinced – namely that our intuitions are sensible and that sensibility is receptive in nature. It is this basic tenet which Nietzsche never seems to question about our cognitive make up which I believe is responsible for his need to posit a causal relation between things-in-themselves and phenomena. Thus, Nietzsche displays an

¹¹² See: *WWR* 1, 2010, p. 32 and *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*, 1974, §21, pp. 77-8.

awareness of an inherent limitation which all forms of transcendental idealism are subject to – including his own. Yet, interestingly, he seems to accept this limitation as something which simply cannot be overcome; it seems an inescapable and insurmountable problem which results when we assume that our sensibility is receptive in nature.

However, as we saw with Kant, one may assume the need for such a causal or necessary ground of phenomena without subscribing to a *metaphysical* correspondence view of truth.¹¹³ What I shall argue for in the next section is that contrary to most Nietzsche scholarship, I do not believe that Nietzsche in his early writings, straightforwardly accepts the metaphysical correspondence theory of truth, but rather that he displays an indecisiveness on the topic.

5. Ideality of the Empirical World

We have thus far considered Nietzsche's remarks assuming that he takes for granted the metaphysical correspondence view of truth. With this assumption in hand, we argued that if Nietzsche is using metaphysical truth as the criterion for truth, then his arguments must be sceptical in nature, for they seek not to demonstrate the falsity of our knowledge claims, but rather to undermine their justifiability. We then showed how Nietzsche recognises an inherent limitation in transcendental idealism in its various forms. What I would now like to bring attention to is a point which was discussed in the first two parts of our study regarding the veridical status of phenomena. The question now is whether the fact that our experience is always of things as they appear to us necessarily implies some form of

¹¹³ Kant arguably does subscribe to some form of the correspondence view of truth. It depends on how we wish to read his claim about an objective unity of consciousness. Presumably Kant means some combination in the object; whether this amounts to a correspondence view is perhaps unclear, but regardless it is not of immediate concern to us. What does concern us is that he does not accept a metaphysical correspondence view of truth.

illusoriness of the phenomenal world, if we assume that the properties of phenomena differ from those of things as they are in themselves. Nietzsche's position on this issue will determine whether he is in fact committed to the metaphysical correspondence view of truth.

We saw that Kant was rather unambiguous regarding the type of reality he assigned to phenomenal truth. Regarding space and time, he claimed that they were empirically real but transcendently ideal, and he took great care to point out that this status of space and time did not demote them to the status of illusions in any normal sense of the word.¹¹⁴ Schopenhauer, on the other hand, was much more ambivalent towards the status of empirical reality. We saw that at times he seemed to accept the veridical status of empirical reality (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 56), whereas at other times he insinuated that the lesson of Kant's philosophy, in which terms it is similar to the teachings of Plato and Indian philosophy, is that the empirical world is illusory. Carefully considering Schopenhauer and Kant's arguments we also saw that Schopenhauer did not seem justified in labelling empirical truth illusory – or at least not in using the term 'illusory' the way he does. The question for us is, 'What is Nietzsche's attitude towards empirical reality?' Given the arguments thus far, one might expect Nietzsche to claim that the lack of guarantee of any congruence between empirical and metaphysical truths increases the likelihood of the former being illusory; he would thus be following the Schopenhauerian line of thought. However, to our surprise, what we find in Nietzsche is an awareness of the fallacious assimilation of transcendental ideality with illusoriness. We find this idea expressed very well in a notebook entry: "We far too easily confuse *Kant's* thing in itself with the *Buddhists'* true essence of things: that is reality either exhibits nothing but *semblance* or an *appearance that is wholly adequate to the truth*. Semblance as nonbeing is confused with the appearance of the existent" (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [148], p. 48). Although Nietzsche refers here to Buddhist philosophy as opposed to Hindu philosophy, it does not seem like

¹¹⁴ Chapter 2: 2 and A28/B42.

too much of a stretch to think that what Nietzsche has in mind here is precisely Schopenhauer's conflation of phenomena with empirical illusion because of the veil of Maya, as found in Hindu philosophy. This quote is of fundamental importance as it seems, in many respects, to counter everything which has been argued for thus far. For, even the sceptical line of thought regarding our inability to know whether phenomena correspond to things-in-themselves, still depends on a metaphysical correspondence view of truth, whereby the criteria for truth is the correspondence between the thing-in-itself and our empirical objects of cognition.¹¹⁵ But what this quote highlights is that Nietzsche did not even consider the fact that our knowledge is inevitably of phenomena as implying illusion, even if phenomena were known to be different from things as they are in themselves.¹¹⁶ Nietzsche *does* still seem to believe that we lack the justification to believe that our phenomenal truths capture the thing-in-itself, but that this does not make our empirical truths potentially illusory. What he seems to oppose is the binary view that either our appearances are mere semblances which are illusory, *or* our appearances are congruent with things in themselves, and therefore true. What this suggests is that Nietzsche's view is in fact *very* Kantian, whereby he believes that appearances most likely differ from things-in-themselves (Kant would say they definitely do) but that this does not leave them on a par with "sunlight reflected off sand that a distant traveller mistakes for water, or the discarded rope that the traveller thinks is a snake (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 28) – that is, those things which Kant would call not transcendentally, but *empirically* ideal. However, despite the potential attractiveness of this reading, we should note that in the same notebooks, from the same time-period, Nietzsche also makes a claim that the status

¹¹⁵ N.B. It was the lack of guarantee of correspondence which raised sceptical doubts about our empirical knowledge.

¹¹⁶ This reading is fundamentally at odds with Clark's reading of TL which claims that according to Nietzsche only claims which are universally true independently of us (i.e. claims that are true about the world-in-itself) are of ultimate value. Why *ultimate* value (as opposed to just value) ought to be the decisive factor in rendering a belief true or false – even on a pragmatist reading of Nietzsche – is rather unclear. C.f. (Clark, 1990, p. 89). I believe that Clark's disregard of Nietzsche's notebook writings seriously undermines her reading of TL (we should also bear in mind that TL was itself unpublished during Nietzsche's life, and so to give an exposition of it without any supplementary analysis of other notebook writings seems a dubious endeavour).

of space and time as *a priori* intuitions undermines the certainty of empirical knowledge. “If the sciences are correct, then we no longer stand on Kant’s foundation: if Kant is correct, then the sciences are incorrect” (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [125]). The two positions simply cannot be reconciled; if Nietzsche believes that the implication of Kant’s philosophy, assuming that appearances are qualitatively different from things-in-themselves, is that empirical knowledge is rendered illusory, then he is clearly taking up a position contrary to Kant, and similar to some of Schopenhauer’s claims in WWR. Given the presence of both positions in notebooks from the same period, it seems the only thing we can do is to suspend judgment as to Nietzsche’s thoughts on this topic in this period, and conclude that he was at best undecided on the issue, and at worst confused.

Conclusion

Taking the previous three sections together, we find that Nietzsche’s argument begins with a Kantian-Schopenhauerian representationalist account of experience. He then argues that objects are represented by us in specific forms. As to whether these forms pertain to things as they are in themselves, we cannot know, but the possibility remains (Nietzsche’s acceptance of the neglected alternative). This led us to the conclusion that *if* Nietzsche is adopting a metaphysical correspondence view of truth, then his arguments must be aimed at the recognisable justifiability of knowledge. He then says how the very inference to a logical ground for phenomena is an invalid inference, but one which any form of transcendental idealism (including his own) must presume. Finally, we saw that despite the arguments above, it was left unclear whether Nietzsche thought that phenomenal reality is undermined because we cannot be justified in knowing that it corresponds to noumenal truth. Regarding the type of ideality that we ought to assign empirical reality, Nietzsche at

times seems to adopt a Kantian position and at others a Schopenhauerian one, leaving it unclear exactly where he stands on this issue.

In the next chapter, we shall see how Nietzsche starts to launch more cogent attacks on our putative knowledge, seeking to undermine its component of veracity. Furthermore, with these arguments we will see the emergence of what exactly it is about empirical knowledge which Nietzsche believes undermines its veracity. As it turns out, this is not due to a lack of correspondence to things-in-themselves but rather because of a lack of correspondence to a world of primary impressions.

CHAPTER 7: Nietzsche on the Concept

Introduction

We must now turn to look at Nietzsche's concerns with the role of concepts in experience. The line of thought governing this strand of Nietzsche's critique is that concepts falsify reality. Through this line of argument, therefore, Nietzsche is not merely making sceptical remarks regarding our inability to *justify* our knowledge claims; he is rather attempting to undermine the *truth*, or veridical status, of our epistemological claims by tracing the problem to our intellect's reliance on concepts in order to have cognition of an objective world. To put it in Kantian terms, we may view the first part of Nietzsche's claims – where he (arguably) focuses on mediation of the thing-in-itself through sensibility – as highlighting problems that arise as a result of our intuitions being sensible as opposed to intellectual;

more precisely, he was concerned with the epistemological implications arising from the receptivity of sensibility coupled with *a priori* determinations of experience. His critique of the role of the concept in experience, on the other hand, can be viewed as a critique of our understanding being discursive as opposed to intuitive. Thus, it is the discursivity of the understanding – the fact that it must cognise objects through concepts – which Nietzsche will view as implying a falsification of reality. I shall argue that Nietzsche's criticism is far more complex than the impression one might get from a reading of *TL*. Through examining his notebook fragments and seeing where Nietzsche stands on the possibility/impossibility of non-conceptual experience we will get a clearer picture of the sense in which Nietzsche criticises the role of the concept. Once again, I believe that Nietzsche's thoughts on the topic ultimately seem more in line with Kant than they do with Schopenhauer. As a result of this, we will also see how the most serious deficiency in Nietzsche's critique is one which he inherits from Kant as a result of adopting the latter's theory of empirical concept formation (to be explored in Chapter 8).

1. Concept Creation

Our discussion on the truths articulated in language, and the epistemic distance between our representations (metaphors) and the thing-in-itself, hinged on a certain conception of concept formation, to which we must now turn our attention. Note that the discussion on concept formation is epistemologically more basic than the claims regarding language, because referring expressions in language ultimately are anchored in 'images'. We will now be considering how the image, which is generated by the nerve stimuli, gets classified as a certain *type* of image which the word then designates.

Nietzsche's accounts, both in *TL* and his notebook writings, of concept creation are almost solely concerned with empirical concepts; they are furthermore very similar to

Kant's account. Of course, Kant speaks very little of empirical concepts in CPR and dedicates most of the *Analytic* to securing the objective validity of the *pure* concepts of the understanding – or the categories. However, we do find in Kant's *JL* an account of empirical concept formation which is virtually identical to Nietzsche's later account in his notebooks. In the *JL*, Kant gives a description of the logical acts of the understanding through which empirical concepts are created. These acts of the understanding are: "*Comparison* of representations among one another in relation to the unity of consciousness; *reflection* as to how various representations can be conceived in one consciousness; and finally *abstraction* of everything else in which the given representations differ" (Kant, *JL*, 1992, §6, p. 592). What Kant means by this is that concepts are formed by reflecting on, comparing, and abstracting from our particular representations in order to see similarity between them in what we consider essential and omitting all the differences which we believe to be inessential in some respect. In a footnote to *JL*, Kant describes how we come to form the concept of, for example, a tree:

"I see, e.g., a spruce, a willow, and a linden. By first comparing these objects with one another I note that they are different from one another in regard to the trunk, the branches, the leaves, etc.; but next I reflect on that which they have in common among themselves, trunk, branches, and leaves themselves, and I abstract from the quantity, the figure, etc., of these; thus I acquire a concept of a tree" (Kant, *JL*, 1992, §6, p. 592n).

Let us now turn to Nietzsche's account of concept creation to see the striking semblance between his and Kant's accounts. What Nietzsche identifies as guiding the process of concept formation is the power of 'forgetfulness' and 'dissimulation'. In order to create a concept, the intellect must overlook all the specificities of each original primary impression. To be sure, no primary impression is ever wholly identical with any other one; each is unique in its own right. However, if each impression were to be treated as original and unique, incapable of classification, we could never create concepts. As Nietzsche writes "Concepts come about through the identification of non-identical: that is, by means of the

illusion that there is something identical, by means of the presupposition of *identities*: in other words, by means of false perceptions” (Nietzsche, 1995, §23 [11], p. 118).¹¹⁷ He makes a very similar point in *TL* when he says that a “word becomes a concept insofar as it simultaneously has to fit countless more or less similar cases – which means, purely and simply, cases which are never equal and thus altogether unequal” (Nietzsche, *TL*, 1979, p. 83).¹¹⁸ What Nietzsche seems to be highlighting is a point mentioned by Kant in the *JL* as well. This is regarding the contrast between the singularity of an intuition compared to the universality of a concept. For Kant, an intuition is a *repraesentatio singularis* whilst a concept is a *repraesentatio per notas communes*; or again, a concept is a “representation of what is common to several objects, hence a representation *insofar as it can be contained in various ones*” (Kant, *JL*, 1992, p. 589n). The problem which Nietzsche identifies with empirical concepts seems to be that since they must subsume countless unequal cases under themselves, insofar as we use concepts to cognise an object, we are not cognising the object in all its specificity, but rather cognising it through a universal that abstracts from some of that specificity. This problem is the result of the presumption of identity between our primary impressions (appearances) in concept creation.¹¹⁹ But without the presumption of identity by us, there can also be no such thing as a ‘leaf’, a ‘tree’, or a ‘rock’; each of these concepts presume some ‘essential’ qualities which constitute the thing as what it is. In (visual) experience, however, we are merely confronted with a variety of perceptual images, which themselves know nothing of identity. Through the “*identification*

¹¹⁷ See also (Nietzsche, *TL*, 1979, p. 83).

¹¹⁸ Note the similarity with both Hume and Berkeley’s accounts. Hume says: “Thus shou’d we mention the word , triangle, and form the idea of a particular equilateral one to correspond to it, and shou’d we afterwards assert, *that the three angles of a triangle are equal to each other*, the other individuals of a scalenum and isoceles, which we overlook’d at first, immediately crowd in upon us, and make us perceive the falsehood of the proposition, tho’ it be true with relation to that idea, which we had form’d” (Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1978, p. 21). Berkeley, in the *Principles*, says “For example, the mind having observed that Peter, James, and John, resemble each other, in certain common agreements of shape and other qualities, leaves out of the complex or compounded idea it has of Peter, James, and any other particular man, that which is peculiar to each, retaining only what is common to all [...]” (Berkeley, 2004, §9)

¹¹⁹ I will return to this claim in §4:2 of the present chapter to consider both a counter-argument to it followed by a defence of Nietzsche’s position.

of *non-identical things*" (Nietzsche, 1995,§19 [236], p. 74) we overlook all that which is specific to each primary impression and only consider that which we consider it as having in common with others. We then create the concept under which we subsume our primary impressions.

We should note here a change in the criteria of truth which Nietzsche has effected. Previously, we argued that if Nietzsche was arguing for a lack of justification of knowledge, it was due to our inability to guarantee correspondence between phenomena and things-in-themselves. Thus, the thing-in-itself was seen as the benchmark of truth, or what the object truly is. However, the problem with concepts is not that they fail to capture the thing-in-itself, but rather that through the employment of a universal (the concept) we fail to experience the singularity and particularity of our primary impressions. Thus, it would seem as if Nietzsche is now considering our appearances or primary impressions as the benchmark of truth. We should bear this possible change of perspective in mind as we proceed through the next sections.¹²⁰

2. Knowledge Creation

Having established the 'dissimulation' of the individuality of intuitions involved in concept creation, Nietzsche carries over this analysis to consider how this manner of creating concepts, combined with our need to cognize objects through concepts, has a bearing on what we consider to be knowledge. Nietzsche's view seems to be twofold: the first claim appears to be that our need to cognize objects through concepts combined with the fact that empirical concepts are *created* by us, somehow undermines the extent to which our

¹²⁰ We find, in Nietzsche's late notebooks, entries where he adopts this criterion of truth. "The antithesis of this phenomenal world is not 'the true world', but the formless unformulable world of the chaos of sensation – *another kind* of phenomenal world, a kind 'unknowable' for us" (WP 569). See also (Anderson, 2005).

'truths' (our knowledge claims) are truly about the world as it is given to us. Along this line of thought Nietzsche would be arguing that the object as it is experienced by us is *an actively constructed* object. The second level to his analysis is that this very mode of cognising objects and of constructing empirical concepts has a bearing on the type of objectivity which we assign to our (conceptual) object of cognition and that it furthermore leads us to believe that the conceptualised object is instantiated in nature, in and of itself, as we conceptually experience it. In the rest of this section we will look at the first of these issues, whereas the second line of thought will be dealt with in the following section.

Nietzsche turns from his discussion on concept creation, to ask: given these facts about cognition, what does our knowledge amount to? For Nietzsche, all of knowledge is nothing but "*classifying*" and "*establishing species*" (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [236], p. 74) under which we subsume primary impressions. Indeed, "all explaining and knowing is actually nothing but categorization" (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [215], p. 67). Knowledge amounts to "the construction of a pyramidal order according to castes and degrees" (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 84) where our primary impressions are subsumed under more general concepts. Nietzsche compares what we call knowledge-expansion to someone who hides something behind a bush and then seeks and finds it in the same place (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 85). According to Clark's reading of this passage, Nietzsche is here rejecting the idea that *a priori* truths tell us anything about the world and that he is adopting the Humean position that all *a priori* truths are analytic (Clark, 1990, p. 84). But, it seems very unclear why Clark reads Nietzsche in this passage as dealing with *a priori* truths. Although Clark acknowledges Schopenhauer's influence on Nietzsche in other parts of TL, she seems to have missed Nietzsche's indebtedness to Schopenhauer in this passage. For we find at the start of Book 2 of WWR a classification by Schopenhauer of sciences into aetiological and morphological, and it is his description of the latter which Nietzsche seems to have in mind when speaking about empirical knowledge. For Schopenhauer, morphology "classifies, separates, combines and arranges the [variety of determinate] organic forms into natural and artificial

systems, bringing them under concepts that make possible an overview and cognition of the whole” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 120). As he continues on the next page, he says that morphology “presents us with an infinite variety of innumerable forms that are clearly related through an unmistakable family resemblance” (Schopenhauer, WWR 1, 2010, p. 121). Thus, Schopenhauer is clearly concerned with empirical concepts, and as we shall see when we consider Nietzsche’s example, so is he. Nietzsche’s point is that because of the discursivity of our understanding, we must subsume any appearances of intuition under concepts; only insofar as appearances are united under concepts can we cognize them *as objects*. As Nietzsche puts it: “Our reason is a surface force, is *superficial*. This is also called ‘subjective’. It arrives at knowledge by means of *concepts*: which means that our thought consists in categorization, name-calling. Hence something that comes down to an arbitrary human convention and does not capture the thing itself” (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [66], p. 24).

We should therefore ask, how do we come to cognize something *as an object* – which is to say through concepts? We first establish the conditions which would constitute something as an F. We do this, as mentioned, through abstractions. For example, we have two different primary impressions which we judge to have some similarities. By ignoring or overlooking the differences between the impressions and only considering their similarities which we consider to be ‘essential’ in some respect, we classify them as instantiations of F and subsume both things under the concept of ‘F-ness’. When we have another impression which shares the same essential qualities, we consider this new thing to also be an instantiation of F. We have thus, we believe, *discovered* knowledge. The point to note here is the difference between discovering and creating. We believe that we discover the object of knowledge whereas Nietzsche’s claim is that we *create* it. By subsuming the new thing under the concept we created, we believe that we have attained some new knowledge about the world in itself. We assume that this third thing is, *and has always been*, an F, and that our encountering it has merely *revealed* to us its nature as an F. But what we have

forgotten in this process is that the concept of F was nothing which we discovered in the world. In the world we were never confronted with either the perfect F or any instantiations of F. We were only ever confronted with a wide array of impressions which we proceeded to classify. What knowledge essentially amounts to, according to Nietzsche, is creating genera and being amazed and proud when something falls into one of the genera we have created. In this sense, there seems to be some plausibility to Clark's reading of Nietzsche's view. However, *pace* Clark, Nietzsche is not claiming that *a priori* truths do not tell us anything about the world, but rather that even our empirical concepts fail to capture the world as it is presented to us in our primary impressions because empirical concepts are ways in which we unite our sensory impressions – they are forms which are extraneous and alien to these impressions as they are given to us.¹²¹

We should note at this stage that the preceding analysis only gives a partial account of what Nietzsche is critiquing with the concept. The second strand of criticism is about our *belief* in the kind of objectivity which our conceptualised empirical objects possess. As we will argue in the next section, Nietzsche will claim that a discursive understanding leads to the *belief* that our 'truths' have metaphysical validity.

¹²¹ We should note that the corresponding passage from TL makes it seem as if Nietzsche is once again concerned with the thing-in-itself. "If I make up the definition of a mammal, and then, after inspecting a camel, declare 'look, a mammal,' I have indeed brought a truth to light in this way, but it is a truth of limited value. That is to say, it is a thoroughly anthropomorphic truth which contains not a single point which would be 'true in itself' or really and universally valid apart from man" (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 85). If Nietzsche is insinuating that the concept removes us from the thing-in-itself, his position is untenable. It furthermore seems to contradict his putative devaluation of our desire for knowledge of the noumenal realm. We should note that only a couple of pages earlier in TL Nietzsche says "The 'thing in itself' (which is precisely what the pure truth, apart from any of its consequences, would be) is likewise something quite incomprehensible to the creator of language and something not in the least worth striving for" (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 82). Again in his notebooks of the same period, Nietzsche claims that things' "properties in themselves are of no concern to us; they matter only insofar as they have an effect on us" (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [156], p. 50). Like much of his early thoughts on epistemology, we find here an ambivalent attitude which often borders on confusion and contradiction. I do not believe that every instance of seeming contradiction can be resolved in his early writings, but that in our analysis, and especially criticism, of Nietzsche, we ought to attempt to reconstruct as strong of an argument as possible.

3. Reversal of Cause and Effect

I now wish to consider a certain facet of Nietzsche's attack on our 'truths' which focuses on our belief in the objectivity of our conceptualised object. This line of thought has recently been proposed by Joshua Andresen who describes the kernel of Nietzsche's error theory in *TL* to be concerned with not our failure to capture the thing-in-itself, but rather with our belief that we *have* captured the thing-in-itself in our representations. Andresen's argument focuses on how, through the subsumption of primary impressions under concepts, we come to believe that our conceptualised object is instantiated in the world, in and of itself. In the remainder of this section I shall explore this line of thought, and although I believe that there is some textual evidence to support Andresen's claim, I do not believe that this is the predominant sense of the illusoriness of our putative knowledge claims to which Nietzsche brings our attention.

After his discussion on the concept, Nietzsche asks us: What then are our truths? To which he replies: "A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. *Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions*" (Nietzsche, *TL*, 1979, p. 84, my italics). We have now reached the point in *TL* where Nietzsche believes to have established that our putative knowledge is illusory, and as we have seen this is not through an argument about correspondence to things-in-themselves, but rather through an argument directed at alleged problems with a discursive understanding – namely that intuitions must be cognized through concepts.

According to Nietzsche this mode of classifying primary impressions has implications for our posture towards the kind of objective validity which we believe our knowledge to possess. By being an abstraction from our primary impressions, the concept leads, Nietzsche argues, to a reversal of cause and effect with respect to how we regard our

knowledge of the object. When we see a 'leaf', we believe that what caused us to see a 'leaf' was the fact that out there in nature there was a leaf which we *encountered*. We thus posit the leaf (in nature) as the cause of us seeing a leaf. In other words, we believe that a leaf in nature was the cause of our conceptual representation of it (the effect) (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 83). We forget that what made us see a leaf was the creative and artistic creation of the concept *by us*, resulting from a process of abstraction of specificities from our primary impressions. The cause of our experiencing our primary impression *as* the object – this leaf – therefore, essentially involves our own artistic input in concept creation. According to Andresen, the point Nietzsche is making in his discussion on concept creation is not that the concept itself falsifies reality in some sense, but rather that through the application of the concept to our intuitions we believe that we have attained metaphysical truth. The focus of Nietzsche's discussion, therefore, according to Andresen, is the process of the reversal of cause and effect whereby the object, *as it is conceptualised*, is believed to exist in the world in and of itself. Without the subsumption of impressions under concepts, we could never think that there was such a thing as a leaf, tree, or rock in the world, in and of itself. The belief that our conceptual objects exist conceptually in nature itself depends on our creation of concepts in the first place and then reversing cause and effect. It is through our 'forgetfulness' of the fact that "the original perceptual metaphors are metaphors" (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 86) that we take these metaphors to refer to some essence instantiated in the world in and of itself which causally relates to our representation and which our representation correctly represents. Nietzsche's critique is not aimed at concepts removing us from the thing-in-itself; indeed we have seen that Nietzsche questions the very idea of taking the thing-in-itself as the benchmark or criterion for truth. It is rather that through concepts we come to *believe* that we *have* captured the thing-in-itself in our representations. Our truths, therefore, are "illusions we have forgotten are illusions because we have forgotten that our 'truths' do not refer to the world but rather encapsulate a particular human relation to the world" (Andresen, 2010, p. 267).

We do find some evidence in the notebook writings to support Andresen's claim, although it must be noted that this evidence is limited. For example, at one point Nietzsche claims that "Without a certain amount of *delusion*, no one can firmly believe that he is in possession of truth" (Nietzsche, 1995, §29 [8], p. 191) or again, a few notes later, where Nietzsche claims that art, despite having deception as its aim, does not in fact deceive us, for it does not involve a pretension of providing us with truth; it presents us with illusions and is therefore 'true' (Nietzsche, 1995, §29 [17], p. 198) or at least truthful.

Although Andresen's reading has some plausibility, and some textual support (more so in *TL* than in the notebook fragments) I do not believe that it is the only, or even the main sense in which Nietzsche wishes to raise sceptical doubts about our truths. The main reason for this, once again, is textual and goes back to the very passage from *TL* which Andresen quotes, where Nietzsche says that our "truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions" (Nietzsche, *TL*, 1979, p. 84). What we must note here is that regardless of whether we had forgotten our truths to be illusions, *they were nonetheless* illusory for reasons prior to, and independent of, our 'forgetfulness' about their illusoriness. Thus, it cannot be the case that Nietzsche *merely*, or even *predominantly*, sees the illusion as lying in our forgetfulness of the illusoriness of our 'truths'. Although this is certainly an aspect of the misleadingness of our 'truths', it is merely *one more way* in which Nietzsche sees us as deluding ourselves. I believe that Nietzsche realises that this argument presupposes other arguments which must already have established the falsity of our putative knowledge claims.

4. Contra Nietzsche

We will now turn to consider some criticisms of Nietzsche's position as interpreted so far; these will focus on Nietzsche's views on the role of the concept in experience. Two issues were raised in the previous section regarding what exactly Nietzsche is critiquing in his discussion of the concept – both of which were left unresolved. The first was Andresen's claim that what Nietzsche is primarily critiquing in TL is the belief in the metaphysical reality of the properties objects appear to have in virtue of our application of concepts to primary impressions. Our argument *contra* Andresen was that Nietzsche must have prior reasons for maintaining the illusoriness of our 'truths', to which Andresen's arguments are only secondary. We will now consider problems which arise for Nietzsche if he wishes to hold onto the position that it is the concept which is responsible for the error; I will argue that Nietzsche does not succeed in isolating the concept as the origin of our belief in the metaphysical validity of empirical knowledge.

The second issue mentioned in the previous section was the claim that in his discussion on concept creation, Nietzsche is seemingly taking a world of primary impressions (appearances) as constituting the criterion for truth. As a philosopher writing either within, or at least against the backdrop of, transcendental idealism, a major objection from within this tradition Nietzsche would face in trying to posit a world of primary impressions as the benchmark for truth, is Kant's transcendental deduction of the categories. That is, if Nietzsche wishes to claim that a world of primary impressions constitutes the world as it really is *for us* and that the application of the concept, by conflating similarity with identity, somehow gives us an object which is merely an approximation of what the object truly is *phenomenally*, then he must surely subscribe to and justify the claim that we can have cognitive access to the world as it is independently of conceptualisation. However, after considering Kant's deduction and Nietzsche's notebook entries on the conceptual vs. non-conceptual cognition debate, we will find that

Nietzsche once again follows a very Kantian, and interestingly a rather un-Schopenhauerian, line of thought. As we will see, Nietzsche rejects the possibility of non-conceptual cognition, but sees this as simply reinforcing his claim regarding the *inevitable* falsification of reality through concepts.

4.1 Belief in Objectivity

We saw in the previous section that part of Nietzsche's criticism of the role of concepts in experience is that through the subsumption of primary impressions under conceptual forms, we come to believe that the conceptual object exists in the world in and of itself just with the properties our concepts ascribe to it. We thus form the belief that this object, in and of itself, *causes* our representation which captures the object as it is in itself. But, according to Nietzsche, this process involves a reversal of cause and effect because the effect is really the conceptualised object which has, as its cause, both a receptive and a spontaneous element – the receptive element being the stimulus and the spontaneous element being the subsumption of these impressions under a concept – an activity of the understanding. However, through the application of the concept we come to believe that the conceptualised object exists exactly as our representation in the world in and of itself, and that it then *causes* our representation. This was the gist of Nietzsche's argument which we now wish to evaluate.

Nietzsche's position appears to rely on a premise which he does not seem to have explicitly stated or even considered himself. In order for his argument to stand, the sense of objectivity, or the belief that what we perceive corresponds to the thing-in-itself, must not only be inseparable from our use of concepts, but it must also arise *only through* concept application. The question is therefore whether without concept creation we would adopt a subjective stance with regard to our perceptions. In answering this question we must consider how a subject who does not use concepts would relate to his experience.

One of the ways in which we may consider the structure of such a consciousness would be something along the lines of a Hegelian description of sense-certainty. Here, we may concede that a non-concept-using subject still experiences *objects* (in some loose sense) in the world.¹²² However, all this subject could ever think about its object is that “the thing *is*, and it *is*, merely because it *is*” (Hegel, 1977, §91, p. 58). Its object, Hegel says, would only ever be This, Here, Now. But *how* and *why* could such subjects, who only ever know their object as This, Here, Now, without ascribing any properties to it, not believe that their perceptions correspond to the essence of things? Nothing about the structure of such a mode of perception would suggest that the subject would take his object to be different in the world in and of itself. Such a subject may well recognise the independence of the object from himself, Hegel believes. Sense-certainty recognises that “the object *is* [...] regardless of whether it is known or not” (Hegel, 1977, §93, p. 59) by ordinary consciousness. The non-concept-using subject, therefore, posits a “‘This’ as ‘I’, and ‘This’ as object” (Hegel, 1977, §92, p. 59). However, this distinction which ordinary consciousness draws does not entail a perceived difference on the part of consciousness between the object as it is for consciousness and the object as it is in itself. That is, although consciousness can distinguish its object from itself, this distinction does not create, according to Hegel, a sceptical belief by consciousness regarding an alleged inability of knowing the object because of the medium of cognition. The assumption, or in Hegel’s word the *presupposition*, that cognition is either an instrument or a medium which keeps us from knowing the object in itself, is an assumption made by philosophers – not one drawn by ordinary consciousness.¹²³

If this is right, Nietzsche may have failed in showing that the belief in the metaphysical adequacy of our beliefs is a consequence of our use of empirical concepts in

¹²² This is contrasted with Kant for whom the lack of concepts would indicate both lack of consciousness of objects and of a self.

¹²³ This reading is heavily indebted to Stephen Houlgate’s reading in (Houlgate, Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit, 2013).

cognising objects. But, as we argued earlier, this worry of Nietzsche's was only secondary to other arguments through which he believed to have established the illusoriness of our empirical truths. Furthermore, this argument for illusoriness was because of the falsification of a world of primary impressions by conceptual thought. We must therefore now turn to evaluate this line of thought in Nietzsche's writings.

4.2 Nietzsche on Non-Conceptual Cognition

In this final section of Chapter 7, I will revisit what I take to be the kernel of Nietzsche's early error theory, namely, that cognition of objects through concepts falsifies a world of primary impressions. But as we said, if Nietzsche wishes to argue for this point, Kant's transcendental deduction seems to stand in his way as something of which he must take account. We, thus, need to look at Kant's 'Deduction' to gain a clearer picture of Nietzsche's own theory of cognition and establish whether he subscribes to a Kantian account of experience as necessarily conceptual, or whether he follows Schopenhauer in allowing for the possibility of non-conceptual experience. Where Nietzsche stands in this debate will also determine to a great extent the cogency of his criticism.

If we relate Kant's Deduction to Nietzsche's criticism of concepts, one thing should be clear; namely, that if Nietzsche wishes to insist upon the possibility of complete non-conceptual experience, as a philosopher writing within the transcendental tradition, his lack of attention to Kant's Deduction seriously jeopardises his claim. Nietzsche, in fact, does not even mention problems and issues with Kant's Deduction in his notebook writings of the early 1870s and though he is undoubtedly not unaware of the Deduction, there is no evidence of any serious involvement with it. However, the extent to which this undermines Nietzsche's critique of the concept is limited because when we consider these arguments, we see that they are primarily concerned with *empirical* concepts and not pure ones. Thus,

Nietzsche's critique of the process through which we take similarity as implying identity is a critique of the way in which we form empirical concepts, and it is furthermore, as we saw earlier, in fact a very Kantian formulation. However, this does not render Kant's Deduction redundant or irrelevant to Nietzsche's thoughts - and the extent depends on what exactly Nietzsche wishes to establish through his critique of empirical concepts. If Nietzsche wants to argue in favour of non-conceptual cognition or experience of objects, then the 'Deduction' stands in his way as something which though not free of problems, is nonetheless a piece of philosophical writing which any transcendental idealist must seriously consider and against the backdrop of which they must justify their own theory. It is true that certain parts of *TL* indeed make it seem as though Nietzsche is following down the Schopenhauerian path of arguing for non-conceptual cognition; especially Part 2 of *TL* may give this impression. But, as we shall see now, Nietzsche's theory of cognition, though quasi-Schopenhauerian in nature, still rejects the Schopenhauerian notion of non-conceptual experience. Furthermore, Nietzsche seems to completely agree with Kant regarding our need to experience the world categorially.

If we turn to *TL*, we find the following passage by Nietzsche which is, in some senses, very similar to claims made by Kant in both the *Aesthetic* and the *Analytic* in *CPR*.

"All that we actually know about these laws of nature is what we ourselves bring to them – time and space, and therefore relationships of succession and number. But everything marvellous about the laws of nature, everything that quite astonishes us therein and seems to demand explanation, everything that might lead us to distrust idealism: all this is completely and solely contained within the mathematical strictness and inviolability of our representations of time and space. But we produce these representations in and from ourselves with the same necessity with which the spider spins. If we are forced to comprehend under these forms, then it ceases to be amazing that in all things we actually comprehend nothing but these forms [...] All that conformity to law, which impresses us so much in the movement of the stars and in chemical processes, coincides at bottom with

those properties which we bring to things. Thus it is we who impress ourselves in this way. In conjunction with this, it of course follows that the artistic process of metaphor formation with which every sensation begins in us already presupposes these forms and thus occurs within them. The only way in which the possibility of subsequently constructing a new conceptual edifice from metaphors themselves can be explained is by the firm persistence of these original forms" (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p. 88).¹²⁴

The passage is quite dense and contains a whole range of Kantian conclusions regarding the possibility of cognition. The most important claim for our purposes is what Nietzsche alludes to in the last sentence, namely, the dependence of empirical concepts upon the categories. Nietzsche speaks in the language of 'metaphor formation', but we know that, by this, he means our construction of empirical concepts.¹²⁵ What he is thus claiming is that every empirical concept must contain within itself these forms which we bring to our experience of *any* object. In fact, Nietzsche is not here merely speaking about pure concepts, but also of the forms of intuitions of space and time. Thus, what he is essentially saying, is that, regardless of their content, our 'metaphors' (empirical concepts) *must* be in accordance with the transcendental object and the forms of space and time. That is, our metaphors must always be of spatio-temporal objects, which display some sort of quantity, quality, which act as subjects of which things are predicated, which are in causal relations with other objects, etc. Regardless of the metaphor, Nietzsche believes, these are the criteria which *any* metaphor must satisfy. Thus, Nietzsche is clearly not wedded to the Schopenhauerian position discussed in Chapter 4: 2, and although he retains certain Schopenhauerian elements in his theory of cognition, he nonetheless rejects the possibility of non-conceptual cognition. We find the Schopenhauerian strand in his notebooks where

¹²⁴ Compare this to a passage from the A-Deduction where Kant states: "the order and regularity in the appearances which we entitle nature we ourselves introduce. We could never find them in appearances had we not ourselves, or the nature of our mind, originally set them there" (A125).

¹²⁵ I do not wish to claim that metaphor and empirical concept are inter-changeable throughout TL, because although, for Nietzsche, all empirical concepts are metaphors, he does not claim that all metaphors are empirical concepts (c.f. his discussion on nerve stimuli being metaphors). In this specific passage, however, it is clear that when he speaks about metaphor, he has in mind empirical concepts.

he says "Sensation reflects movements that occur frequently and with lightning speed, and that then are gradually assimilated, produce inferential operations, that is, the sense of causality. Space and time are dependent upon the sensations of causality [...] Consciousness commences with the sensation of causality" (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [161]. p. 52). Now, although this account sounds very Schopenhauerian given the prominence attached to the role of causality in experience, *unlike* Schopenhauer Nietzsche does not believe that we can proceed from this to the claim that we have experience of objects from causality alone. In fact, Nietzsche sees the belief in the possibility of non-conceptual cognition as a kind of faith retained by philosophers and non-philosophers alike. We find a notebook entry where Nietzsche expresses his belief that a discursive understanding is simply a fact of our intellect, and that as such, cognition must necessarily happen through concepts, or metaphors. He claims that knowing does not want metaphors for things, but wants to know the very thing itself, as an appearance given to us in intuition; cognition "wants to hold onto the impression without metaphor, and without any consequences" (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [228] p. 71). But, he then acknowledges that there can be "*no real knowing without metaphor*". But the deception about this fact remains, that is, the *faith* in a *truth* of sensory impressions" (Ibid.). The second statement makes clear that Nietzsche sees the possibility of non-conceptual cognition – that is, knowing a world of primary impressions – as impossible; "*Knowledge* is nothing but operating with the most favoured metaphors" (Ibid.). Thus, for Nietzsche, the discursivity of our understanding is an inescapable fact of our form of cognition, and experience of the world in the form of perception which Schopenhauer claims that we all possess is, for Nietzsche, another example of the faith in this possibility retained by philosophers.

It is thus clear that in spite of his critique of the role of the concept in experience, Nietzsche retains a very Kantian line of thought in that he insists that experience requires both pure and empirical concepts. We also find that whilst he criticises empirical concepts he largely remains silent on the role of pure concepts insofar as they are meant to lead to

falsity and error.¹²⁶ We also saw that Nietzsche's analysis of empirical concepts was very similar to Kant's account in his JL. But the question which faces us then is what exactly is Nietzsche trying to achieve in *TL* (and notebook writings) by criticising the process of concept formation?

Nietzsche seems to vacillate between a Kantian and a Schopenhauerian position when highlighting the problem with empirical concepts, and it is in fact this vacillation which ultimately renders his position obscure to the point of almost being banal. As evident from the notebook writings, he is committed to the discursivity of our understanding as a matter of fact. However, it is equally clear from his discussion in *TL* that the concept inevitably falsifies reality. Now, although Nietzsche's position is not contradictory *per se*, there is a sense in which holding onto both of these points trivialises his criticism of our 'truths' being illusory. If we consider Nietzsche's claim that cognition *inevitably* falsifies the world (Nietzsche, 1995, §19 [228], p. 71), and if we accept that this is not to do with mediation of the thing-in-itself, then it should be clear that Nietzsche's argument in fact *demand*s that our cognition be discursive; for only in this way is the falsification of reality by cognition *inevitable*. Knowledge, according to Nietzsche, needs and requires conceptualisation; it cannot know the world as it appears in our primary impressions. Concepts, on the other hand, according to Nietzsche's (and Kant's) account of concept creation, are created by simultaneously disregarding the specificities between primary impressions and only considering those qualities which are deemed to be essential in some respect. Thus, when something is cognised (through a concept) it is cognised *through* and *as* a universal. This is not to say that the object is assumed to be identical with all other instantiations of the same concept. Green poses such an objection to this reading of Nietzsche's error theory when he says: "When I judge something to be square, I do not judge it to be *exactly* the same as everything else that is square. Rather, I judge it to be similar to these other things only in its *squareness*" (Green, 2002, p. 19). Although Green is

¹²⁶ In the later writings, Nietzsche attacks these pure concepts as well.

correct, there is something more to what Nietzsche is saying and an everyday example may help elucidate his claim here. Let us assume that I am cognising two tables, A and B, where A is wooden and B is metallic. Although I cognise both objects as tables, I do not thereby cognise them as being qualitatively identical in every respect; that is, I recognise that the tables differ with respect to their materials. However, this difference is once again understood or experienced conceptually, which is to say, that the concept 'wooden' is itself created by disregarding the differences between this wooden thing and other wooden things. This means that the differences between A and B are not cognised *as they are given to me* in sense experience, but rather that these differences are only perceived insofar as *their differences* with other things deemed similar enough are 'forgotten', dissimulated, or overlooked in order for me to yet again be able to cognise these qualities *in their resemblances to* other things, of which I have also disregarded certain qualities, and so on. Thus, no matter how many concepts I use to get closer to the differences between the two tables, there always seems to be an unbridgeable gap because any attempts at bridging it must be done through another concept, which once again *is*, or at least *may* be, disregarding aspects of the primary impression from which it arose. In fact, we should recall that Nietzsche's criticism is of a *discursive* understanding. His point is not, then, that with a discursive understanding we cannot see difference – a point which would border on absurdity, but rather that if we contrast a discursive understanding with an intuitive one, there is a sense in which the latter is capable of a far richer experience of the specificity of intuitions than a discursive understanding is capable of.

However, considering Nietzsche's argument, we ought to question the cogency and relevance of his attack on cognition. Although we may agree with his analysis of the inevitable 'falsification' of a world of primary impressions through conceptual thought, it is the equation of primary impressions with reality which I do not believe Nietzsche manages to secure. Now, if Nietzsche subscribed to a Schopenhauerian account of cognition, this demand could be squared – Nietzsche could claim that at the level of perception we have

this access to, and experience of, the world which is non-conceptual and which reveals the world as it truly presents itself to us. Internal inconsistencies of the Schopenhauerian position put aside for the moment, this account would make sense of what Nietzsche aims to get at in his criticism of empirical concept formation. However, we have just seen that Nietzsche rejects such a theory of cognition, and subscribes much more to a Kantian theory whereby he endorses the discursivity thesis. Thus, he may have argued himself into a position whereby he may claim that concepts falsify – but what exactly it is that they falsify cannot be called reality. We should also question the relevance of arguing for the falsification of reality from an unobtainable perspective on ‘reality’. Is there any warrant for claiming that our experience always falsifies reality as it presents itself to us, even though we never have any access or experience of the world under this aspect? This question becomes even more pressing when we consider that the aspect of cognition responsible for falsification, namely the concept, has been revealed to be absolutely necessary for us to have any experience of either an object or a self. Of course, Nietzsche would undoubtedly turn the question on us to claim that the necessity of conceptual thought for experience only re-enforces his point of the *inevitable* falsification of reality through thought.

Conclusion

I attempted in this chapter to give a reading of Nietzsche’s early error theory which locates the alleged illusoriness of our empirical knowledge claims in the process of concept formation and cognition of objects through concepts. I argued that Nietzsche’s error theory is to be found in his criticism of our possession of a discursive understanding, which somehow removes us from our objects as they are originally given to us through intuition. This led us to consider where Nietzsche stood on the possibility vs impossibility of non-conceptual experience debate. Our claim was that, in order for Nietzsche’s criticism of a discursive understanding to be cogent, he would need to allow for the possibility of non-

conceptual experience on some level. However, what we found was that Nietzsche, in fact, endorses the discursivity claim – a fact which I argued diminishes the strength of his argument. Interestingly, however, we find that Nietzsche's epistemology in this early period seems to be far more Kantian than Schopenhauerian – a perhaps unexpected result. What we will see in the final chapter of this section (Chapter 8) is that perhaps the biggest problem with Nietzsche's account, as we have presented it, is also one which he inherits from Kant, and it regards Kant's theory of empirical concept formation.

CHAPTER 8: Concept Creation and Objective Validity

Introduction

I now wish to consider a certain problem which lies at the heart of both Nietzsche's and Kant's theories of empirical concept formation, which I believe can be used to put forward

a sceptical argument regarding the objective validity of our empirical concepts. I believe that the empiricist account of concept formation on which both Kant and Nietzsche rely, undermines the rule-governedness which the subsumption of appearances under concepts require in order for our conceptual objects to have objective validity; that is to say, for our empirical concepts to express a necessary synthesis of intuitions. In arguing for this position I will build on arguments by M.S. Green, Henry Allison, and Hannah Ginsborg. It should be noted, however, that the argument is not proposed as one which Nietzsche made against Kant; nor is it presented as an aspect of Kant's philosophy, through his negligence of which Nietzsche's own epistemology suffers; it is rather presented as a critique of both philosophers' accounts of empirical concept formation.

Lastly, it should be noted that although the current chapter looks primarily at Kant's account of concept formation, we should bear in mind the similarity between Kant's account and Nietzsche's account as was argued for in chapter 7: 2. We may reconsider, for example, the following account by Nietzsche from TL of how we form empirical concepts: "Let us now think in particular of how concepts are formed: every word immediately becomes a concept precisely because it is not intended to serve as a reminder of the unique, entirely individualised primal experience to which it owes its existence, but because it has to fit at one and the same time countless more or less similar cases which, strictly speaking, are never equal or, in other words, are always unequal. Every concept comes into being through the equation of non-equal things. *As certainly as no leaf is ever completely identical to another, so certainly the concept of leaf is formed by arbitrarily shelving these individual differences or forgetting the distinguishing features*" (Nietzsche, TL, 1979, p.83, my emphases).¹²⁷ However, since this account of empirical concept formation has been addressed more in Kant studies than it has in Nietzsche studies, I shall engage here with Kant rather than Nietzsche, though the conclusions, to be sure, apply equally to both.

¹²⁷ C.f. pp. 150-152 above.

1. Apperceptive vs Phenomenalist Approaches in Kant

In his book, Green brings attention to two different approaches which he locates in Kant, which he labels the apperceptive and phenomenalist approaches. The apperceptive approach tries to secure a necessary unity of appearances through the spontaneity of the understanding. This, Kant (arguably) achieves for the categories through them having their source *a priori* in the understanding, and from the way in which every appearance must stand under the relations of the synthetic unity of apperception. Green's point is basically that what purportedly *a priori* laws or principles must demonstrate is that events or objects determined by them, must be determined *necessarily* - indeed this is what is demanded of them through their status as *a priori*!

But, there is also the phenomenalist strand in Kant whereby *empirical* concepts are determined to some extent by their *givenness*; that is, the specific empirical concepts under which appearances are subsumed are meant to express a necessary unity which at the same time does not have its source in the subject, but rather belongs, ontologically, to the object itself. The point here is that an empirical concept, too, must contain under itself a necessary unity, and yet this necessary unity is of quite a peculiar kind for it is not the necessity which *a priori* concepts have by virtue of being prescribed by the subject to the synthesis of *whatever intuitions* he may have. And yet, despite this, when I cognise an object through, for example, the concept 'body', I do not represent those 'marks' which make up the concept body, such as heaviness, impenetrability, or shape, as merely being associated with the concept body, but rather I represent them as "*necessarily belonging* to the singular objects cognized under the concept of body [...] This means that they are determinations that from an ontological standpoint belong to its essence" (Longuenesse, 1998, p. 49 & 49n). In Kant's words, our concern here is with a combination *in the object*, or

what it is we mean through our use of the copula 'is' in a judgment.¹²⁸ Our question, then, is: What determines how appearances are unified under *empirical* concepts?

We saw in Ch. 7.1, that Kant gives (in JL) a description of the logical acts of the understanding through which empirical concepts are created. These acts of the understanding are: comparison, reflection, and abstraction.¹²⁹ What Kant means by this is that empirical concepts are formed by reflecting on, comparing, and abstracting from our particular representations in order to see similarity between them in what we consider essential and omitting all the differences which we believe to be inessential in some respect. It is worth mentioning here again the passage from JL where Kant gives the example of how we form the empirical concept of a tree:

"I see, e.g., a spruce, a willow, and a linden. By first comparing these objects with one another I note that they are different from one another in regard to the trunk, the branches, the leaves, etc.; but next I reflect on that which they have in common among themselves, trunk, branches, and leaves themselves, and I abstract from the quantity, the figure, etc., of these; thus I acquire a concept of a tree" (Kant, JL, 1992, §6, p. 592n).

But this account implies that exactly *which* empirical concept should be used to unite appearances depends, in one respect, on the material that is given, not merely upon some spontaneity of the understanding. It is true that it is the intellect, broadly, which is responsible for subsuming appearances under intuitions and that this is an *activity*, but what we are concerned with is the necessity with which appearances are related to one another or unified under a concept. In relation to the categories this was easier to establish because their necessity derived from their *a priori* status, meaning (for Kant) that they had their source *in the subject* and were therefore *prescribed to* experience. But, according to Kant's own theory of empirical concept formation, what necessitates the subsumption of appearances under one concept as opposed to another seems to be governed by nothing

¹²⁸ See: B141-2.

¹²⁹ See: Kant, JL, 1992, p. 592.

more than a form of association whereby we have an appearance which we experience as being 'similar' in some fundamental respects to another appearance, and which we then proceed to consider an instantiation of the same concept. Our concern, then, is the presence or absence of a form of rule-governedness for the subsumption of our appearances under empirical concepts.

Kant would claim that concepts act as rules for the subsumption of appearances under themselves. At A106, for example, Kant gives the example of an empirical concept such as 'body' and says "The concept of body, for instance, as the unity of the manifold which is thought through it, serves as a rule in our cognition of outer appearances" (A 106). The way that intuitions are related to concepts is through, what Kant calls, their 'marks'. The empirical concept is created by comparing our sensible representations and searching for these common marks (Longuenesse, 1998, p. 115). We then require a 'rule of apprehension' instructing us which marks we are to privilege in our logical acts of comparison, reflection, and abstraction leading to the creation of the empirical concept. According to Longuenesse, this rule of apprehension is the schema and that "[t]o compare representations is to compare schemata" (Longuenesse, 1998, p. 116). Thus, Kant's account must be that between our appearances of intuitions we can compare, abstract and reflect on certain universal marks which we recognise amongst these intuitions. Through the relevant schema, we then obtain the rule as to which marks we ought to privilege and which we ought to disregard. Longuenesse summarizes this point when she says that "These two operations of comparison and reflection, being the search for what is *different* and *common (qualitatively identical)*, exhibit the first aspect of the 'silent judgment' presiding over the genesis of empirical concepts" (Longuenesse, 1998, p. 134).

As we have seen therefore, Kant is committed to there being a form of rule-governedness which guides us in our subsumption of appearances under concepts by instructing which marks to privilege. What should also be clear from Kant's account is that the application of the rule is wholly dependent on the existence of marks; indeed for the

rule to have any applicability it must relate to marks – only in this way can the rule actually guide us in concept formation. In what follows, two types of objections will be presented against Kant's account of concept formation. The first strand focuses on the problem of possessing the rule of apprehension prior to the concept. The argument which was first introduced by Allison, and which has received more attention recently by Ginsborg, runs along the lines that to have the rule of apprehension instructing us which marks to favour and which to disregard must imply already possessing the concept. The second strand of criticism, which I shall invoke, and to which I believe Ginsborg's arguments are also susceptible, is that regardless of whether we have the rule of apprehension or not, the very use of marks as a basis for discrimination of features is itself a conceptual mode of relating to representations. What Kant's associationist account of empirical concept formation must assume is that we are capable at the transcendental level of synthesis, of recognising similarity and difference non-conceptually – a point to which I shall object.

2. Rule of Apprehension

We may begin by considering Henry Allison's formulation of this problem. Allison describes the issue as: "The basic problem [...] is that Kant's official account of how we form such concepts, namely, by noting common features shared by diverse particulars and abstracting from the differences, seems to presuppose what it purports to explain. For how can one recognize such commonality without in a sense already having the concept? (Allison, 2004, p. 80). More recently, Hannah Ginsborg has tackled this very issue in Kant's philosophy. Addressing Kant's example of how we come to form the concept tree, Ginsborg claims that "the example assumes that we are capable at the outset of recognizing what is presented

to us as having leaves, branches, and a trunk, and this would seem to presuppose that we possess the concepts *leaf*, *branch*, *trunk*. So we need to explain the acquisition of these concepts on the basis of further concepts, and a regress threatens" (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 39). Although Ginsborg seems to be bringing attention to the problem of the marks already being conceptual, it will soon become apparent that her concern is the possession of the rule of apprehension. Ginsborg then proposes an alternative reading of Hume's account of concept creation whereby it is claimed that we obtain the concept through a dispositional tendency to call to mind other objects which we associate with our object of perception. On this reading "the acquisition of the relevant custom does not depend on an antecedent recognition of resemblances among our ideas. Rather it is a basic psychological fact about us that our associations of ideas follow certain regular patterns" (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 45).

The problem with this theory, which Ginsborg notes, is that an association of ideas merely tells me something about my psychological make-up, but it does not necessarily give me a general feature shared by different objects. For example, I may associate a linden tree with Berlin, or a willow tree with childhood picnics (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 47), but I would not, based on these mere associations, believe that linden trees and Berlin, or willow trees and childhood picnics, are 'objects' of the same type, which are subsumed under the same specific concept.¹³⁰

Thus, there seems to be something more to representing a general property common to several objects than to merely have the disposition to associate the two ideas. Ginsborg proposes that what is missing from Hume's account is a notion of 'appropriateness' on the part of the subject regarding his tendency to associate the two ideas (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 48). She furthermore equates the notion of 'appropriateness' with Kant's idea of something being universally valid, not in the *a priori* sense, but in the sense of inter-subjectivity; that is, the tendency to associate the two ideas is appropriate if it is "a

¹³⁰ I say *specific* concept, because the examples of 'Berlin' and 'tree' probably could *eventually* be subsumed under the same concept, but only under a very general one which would be at such a level of generality which hardly discriminates specific objects at all.

tendency that *everyone ought* to feel when entertaining the idea of a linden" (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 49). Ginsborg tries to ascribe a similar account to Kant and she invokes Kant's account of reproductive synthesis in support of her reading. According to her, Kant's account of reproductive synthesis, which is two-fold, requires firstly that we reproduce previous perceptions "that immediately preceded a current perception in order to form a coherent image" (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 50).¹³¹ The second part of reproduction is our ability and activity of, upon experiencing an object, recalling other objects of the same kind. This is what allows us, according to Ginsborg, to attribute properties to the object which are not available to us in immediate sense impression.¹³² An important discrepancy between Kant and Hume, however, which Ginsborg notes, is that for Kant (as we mentioned earlier) concepts are *rules* for the unification of intuitions, whereas for Hume this activity is merely dispositional and associationist. But Ginsborg believes that Kant's accounts of reproductive synthesis can be read as both associationist and rule-governed. The rule-governed aspect of it is what Ginsborg refers to as the normative significance of the reproduction; that is, the belief that *everyone ought* to associate the ideas under consideration the way I do. As Ginsborg puts it: "The associations are rule-governed because in carrying them out I take myself to be doing not only what I am disposed to do, but also what I (and everyone else) ought to do" (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 51).

The immediate objection which Ginsborg considers to this is that surely an idea of appropriateness presupposes that I already have a rule for the synthesis of appearances in mind. That is, what is it that determines whether I think of my association as 'appropriate'? Presumably, this must imply that I have some standard according to which I judge the association to either be appropriate or not. Ginsborg puts the point as "how can I take my association of the idea of linden with the idea of a sycamore to be appropriate if I do not already think of the association as governed by the concept *tree*" (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 53), or

¹³¹ See Kant on synthesis of reproduction in imagination A102.

¹³² We may compare this to Husserl's talk of outer and especially inner horizons and his notion of *Mitwissen*. C.f. (Husserl, 1973, §8).

again that "the very idea that my mental activity is as it ought to be presupposes the antecedent idea of a rule or concept that dictates how it ought to be" (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 55).

In response to this, she gives the example of how children ordinarily come to acquire new concepts by being presented with different objects and being asked to 'sort' these together. Thus, she give the example of how a child comes to learn the concepts of 'solid', 'liquid', and 'gas' by being presented with objects and being asked whether the 'chalk' goes with (or belongs to) the stone, the bottle of water, or the balloon (Ibid.). The child will then, most likely (or eventually), sort the chalk together with the stone without already knowing that the stone and the chalk are both 'solid'. Ginsborg's point is that although the child does not have a prior conception of the concept 'solid', he nonetheless takes his sorting to be appropriate - that is, how the object *ought to* be sorted. Now, a counter argument to this would be that if we take the activity of the child to be rule-governed, then the child must at least be able to consider the possibility that her activity fails to accord with the rule. But, the question is: how could the child ever see this, if the rule is only ever revealed through the activity? Ginsborg's reply is along the lines that although, at the time, the child could not have taken what she did to fail to conform to the rule, she can, afterwards, reflect that had she not acted in *this* way, her activity would not have been rule-governed. In this way, she may take other people not acting like her to be contravening the rule and likewise to take herself as having contravened the rule in the past when her activity was different (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 56).

Ginsborg realises two objections to this point. The first, which she merely glosses, is that surely the subject would recognise that whatever she does will always be in accordance with a rule (Ibid.). But there is more to this point than Ginsborg seems to allow for. The issue is that by merging *de facto* activity and rule-governedness, the argument seems to undermine the very meaning of what it means for something to be rule governed.

We cannot, of course, preclude the possibility of sorting objects 'inappropriately'¹³³, and therefore it is certainly at least possible that the child fails to sort the chalk with the stone, and rather sorts it with the balloon. On this occasion, the child would still believe that its activity is rule governed, and surely on Ginsborg's account its activity *would* be rule-governed. Sometime later, the child comes to realise that the chalk 'ought to' be sorted with the stone, and proceeds to do so. Once again, we must conclude, on Ginsborg's account, that the child both *thought* that he was, and that he *indeed was*, acting in a rule-governed manner. But the trouble now is that the word rule-governedness seems to preclude that both activities of sorting are rule governed (if the sorting is being done with respect to states of matter and not, say, with respect to colour). Surely, if concepts are rules for the synthesis of intuitions, then either the child was following the rule the first time around or the second time around; not that in both instances the child was following the same rule, which on two occasions gave two completely different results. It may make sense to reduce the *belief* in rule-governed activity to the act itself, but surely not the very fact of rule-governedness itself. Thus, perhaps we can say that in each instance the child takes himself to be acting in a rule-governed fashion but that in the first instance he simply fails to do so. But, this still leaves us with the rule as something over and above the activity which is meant to *guide* the activity - leading us back to the initial problem.

The second potential counter argument Ginsborg considers is that the subject must surely recognise that "others who act differently are according with rules that are exemplified by what *they* are doing. So it would seem that she is not in a position to make sense of anyone's ever failing to act as they ought" (Ibid.). Ginsborg's reply to the second objection is that if a subject takes his own activity to be rule-governed, he will not, upon seeing someone acting differently, *ipso facto*, take the other person's activity to be rule

¹³³ By 'inappropriately' we mean here, incorrectly, or what is the same, a combination which does not denote an objective unity of consciousness; that is, a synthesis of appearances which does not denote a combination 'in the object'. We may, for now, assume with Ginsborg that this form of objectivity may be equated with inter-subjectivity. Thus, regardless that the child doing the sorting may *think* he is acting in an inter-subjective way, there is still the fact of whether he *is* doing so or not.

governed too; in fact he will deny that the latter is acting in any rule governed fashion (ibid.). In the example of the children, if child A sorts the chalk with the stone, and then observes B sort it with the bottle of water, there is no reason why A should think that B's activity is rule governed. A will rather believe that *his* activity is rule governed whereas B's is not. But another considerable problem looms again with this formulation. The problem is that A has no basis for believing that his activity is rule-governed and that B's is not. Likewise, B can press the same point against A in believing that he is acting in a rule-governed manner and that A is not. Ginsborg replies to this that the two subjects can "disagree about what is appropriate in a given case [...] without a criterion's being available to resolve that disagreement" (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 57). Although this may be true insofar as we are considering what A *thinks* regarding his own activity and regarding that of B's, it cannot explain how a certain object *is* of a certain kind. Let us again assume that A sorts the chalk with the stone, while B sorts it with the balloon; A will not take B's activity to be rule governed and will take B to be sorting the objects incorrectly. Likewise, B will feel the same about A's activity. On Ginsborg's proposal, all that is resolved is the belief by A regarding B's activity, and B regarding A's activity. Her reading does nothing to address the bigger issue that A is in fact correct and B is wrong; nothing about her reading can vindicate one position over another. In fact, her reading seems to reduce the necessary unity which a concept is meant to possess to an *arbitrary* unity; a unity which is correct by virtue of the fact that the subject united it in that way – with the rule being supplemented simply through the activity of the subject; and regardless of whether the subject sorts objects differently at t1 than it does at t2, or if subject A sorts objects differently from subject B - in all instances the activity is rule-governed. It seems to me that on such a reading, we completely lose the meaning of rule-governed synthesis.

There is one more generic issue with Ginsborg's reading that I would like to simply bring attention to. This is directed at her reading and use of Hume's account of concept creation as one whereby it is simply a "psychological fact about us that our association of

ideas follow certain regular patterns” (Ginsborg, 2006, p. 45). Thus, on this reading it is simply a fact of my psychological make-up that upon seeing a linden my mind is disposed to associate this with the idea of a sycamore, an oak, etc. Ginsborg’s own arguments (as we saw above) tackle the problem that not all associations of ideas that I have denote what I take to be objects under the same concept. However, there seems to me to be a bigger and more fundamental problem with this account, which is that it seems to presuppose that we already possess some concepts to begin with. In Ginsborg’s example, my perception of the linden leads my mind to the idea of the sycamore. But a very basic question which confronts her is: *As what* is the thought or idea of the sycamore brought before our ‘mind’s eye’? When I have a perception of a linden tree, which in turn gives rise to the idea of the sycamore, the sycamore is surely brought before my mind either as intuition or as a concept? But if we agree with Kant that thought can only occur in concepts and never in intuitions (a claim which does not seem particularly controversial, and with which Ginsborg must agree herself),¹³⁴ then we must conclude that my perception of the linden gives rise to the *concept* ‘sycamore’. But this means that Ginsborg’s Humean account must always rely on the fact that we already possess some prior concept which is brought to mind upon having a perception.

3. The Problem of Non-Conceptual Marks

I now wish to consider a problem to which, I believe, all versions of associationist accounts of empirical concept formation, which I have considered, are susceptible; namely, the question of the intelligibility of speaking about recognition of either similarity or difference at the non-conceptual level.

To put the point simply, Kant’s account seems to presuppose an ability at the pre-conceptual level, which upon reflection reveals itself to be merely a conceptual ability. The

¹³⁴ C.f. Ginsborg, 2006, p. 39.

question to pose Kant is: how, at the pre-conceptual level, may we spot marks of an appearance? To claim that we obtain the concept by privileging certain marks and disregarding others according to a rule, leaves it unclear what the status of these marks is. Kant claims that “All our concepts are marks and all thought representation through them” (Kant, JL, 1992, p. 564). Thus, we know that according to him all concepts are marks, but are all marks conceptual? If Kant affirms the second claim, then his position is of course circular; however, even if he does not affirm that all marks are grasped via concepts, he must yet nonetheless demonstrate how we can spot a mark amongst our representations when the mark is not meant to be recognised conceptually. How can a subject compare any two appearances without thinking of the appearances' ‘characteristics’ conceptually? If, as according to Hegel, thinking of ‘something’¹³⁵ non-conceptually, at most, means thinking of it as nothing more than a universal ‘this, here, now’, it is difficult to see how such a way of relating to a thing may provide the basis for comparing ‘characteristics’ between the thing under consideration and some other thing. The problem becomes more evident when we consider the example of the concept tree that Kant gives us in JL about empirical concept creation. Kant speaks about us noting differences in the trunks, branches, leaves, etc. of our different representations of trees, and how, through abstracting what is different and noting what is similar, we come to form the concept. But the problem with Kant’s example is that it is, *inevitably*, one which presumes that discrimination is done conceptually. Thus, if we think of categorisation at two different levels, the general and the transcendental, we may call Kant’s account one of general categorisation for it assumes that we are categorising something according to concepts. But what we are dealing with here is categorisation at the transcendental level, that is, concept *creation* from a pre-conceptual state. The marks we use are meant to be non-

¹³⁵ We must also note that this ‘something’ can be nothing more than the indeterminate manifold of intuition.

conceptual and yet they are meant to serve as the basis for us to spot similarity and difference within our pre-conceptual manifold of intuition.

Now it may be objected that Ginsborg's account avoids this pitfall since it does not invoke the notion of comparison of features, but rather tries to circumvent this problem by speaking of natural dispositions to associate. As will be demonstrated, however, I believe this problem to equally pertain to her formulation as well and that her account of concept formation must not only presuppose some pre-figurative level of conceptual experience (N.B. the sycamore is brought before the mind as a *concept*), but also that her idea of concept creation is still one which relies on looking for similarity and difference between our perceptual objects. To see why this is so, we may once again return to the example of A and B sorting the chalk. Let us assume this time that the objects to categorise the chalk with are a black stone, a red balloon and a bottle of milk. A may proceed to sort the chalk with the stone – a sorting which we agree is correct. B, on the other hand, proceeds to sort the chalk with the bottle of milk. Now, surely both of these sortings are 'correct'; with the difference being that in each case A and B were sorting the objects *with respect to* different referents. A was sorting them with respect to their chemical states, whereas B was sorting them with respect to colours – thus the concept that was being derived in each case differed (in the former that of physical states and in the latter that of different colours). But we ought to ask of Ginsborg's account: what accounts for the fact that I may sort objects in different ways where both sortings are examples of properties that I believe belong to the object in some respect from an ontological perspective, and not merely subjective associations such as Berlin and linden trees? Presumably, this is precisely because in sorting objects, I have a 'something' in mind with respect to which I am discriminating objects. For B, this something is the colours of the three different objects, and B realises and recognises that all three objects 'share' this 'quality' with the chalk of possessing different 'colours'. He can then, based on this, discriminate between different colours. This is not to say that recognising different colours as instantiations of a single quality is enough to discriminate

between these colours, but in order to discriminate between different colours, one must already recognise them as instantiations *of colours*.¹³⁶

The problem which thus arises for all associationist theories of empirical concept formation is their need to explain the possibility of recognising similarity and difference at the non-conceptual level. Similarity and difference both presume something on the basis of which *x* differs from *y*, or something on the basis of which *x* is similar to *y*.¹³⁷ Now, Kant may reply that this ‘something’ on the basis of which similarity and difference is represented is the mark, *but* to this we may reply that the mark *already* presupposes that the manifold of intuition is delineated and that amongst it we spot difference. The reason for this is that the mark *is itself a representation* from the manifold of intuition; indeed “every mark ‘can be considered as a representation in itself’” (Smit, 2000, p. 248).¹³⁸ But, in order for the representation to act as a mark it must stand out from the manifold of intuition, as something which can be related to other representations. Thus, the very possession of marks presumes that we can see difference and similarity amongst the manifold of intuition. This, in turn, means that the marks cannot be used as *that upon the basis of which* we can spot difference and similarity.¹³⁹ We should note here another

¹³⁶ Thus, the argument I am proposing is one which lays down a necessary, but not sufficient, condition of empirical concept creation.

¹³⁷ Furthermore, they presume each other, insofar as there can be no similarity without some form of difference just as there can be no difference without some form of similarity.

¹³⁸ See also (Kant, JL, 1992, p. 564. Note that although Kant sometimes calls a mark a ‘partial representation’, this is when the mark is considered *in relation* to that of which it is the mark – namely the object.

¹³⁹ Smit points out, however, that there is a fundamental difference between two different types of marks, namely intuitive versus discursive marks. An intuitive mark is a partial representation and a ground for our cognition of an intuition whereas a discursive mark is “a part of a concept” and is a partial representation of a concept (Smit, 2000, p. 254). Kant’s claim is that it is through the act of reflection that we make an intuitive mark into a discursive mark, because through this activity we take the partial representation “as a property potentially common to more than one object” (Smit, 2000, p. 255). We should, however, be cautious in accepting this division between different kinds of marks on two grounds. The first reason is simply textual and refers to the fact that by Smit’s own admission, Kant draws this distinction only once in his whole oeuvre which is in the *JL* (p. 564). This, in itself, is some cause for concern regarding Kant’s own thoughts as to the coherence of the division. Secondly, and more importantly, is the question of the very coherence of an intuitive mark. If intuitive marks are, as Smit maintains, “singular instances of properties, as they are represented in, and make up the content of, our intuitions” (Smit, 2000, p. 266) we must ask whether it even

respect in terms of which Ginsborg's account again relies on a recognitional ability at the non-conceptual level; namely, through her presupposition that the manifold of intuition is delineated and that amongst it we can spot similarity and difference. The starting point in Ginsborg's argument is that we already have a perception of a 'linden' or a 'sycamore', etc. and that this perception is associated with some other idea. But, a natural objection is that our manifold of intuition is never composed of a single object against the backdrop of empty space; that is, we are always given a *manifold* of intuition which needs to be gone through, taken up, and synthesised. Thus, to say that we have perception of an *object* such as a linden, or sycamore, must presume that the manifold of intuition has been delineated; and delineation of the intuitive manifold simply means synthesis of the manifold under concepts. The question which Ginsborg fails to address is: How is it that we are given a 'linden' in the first place, which we then associate with our idea of a 'sycamore'? How did we know that the sensations of 'green' (say the contours of the linden tree's leaves) are to be included in the object whereas the sensations of brown covering parts of the sensations of green (say a brown bench in front of the linden tree) are not part of the perception? Surely, in order for any association to occur between the linden and our idea of the sycamore, *we must first have picked out the linden* from our manifold of intuition. Otherwise it would be the entire sensible manifold for which we would search an association (if this is even possible). Thus, we find with Ginsborg's account that not only is that which is associated with the perception a concept, but the perception *itself* seems to be conceptual insofar as for it to serve as the basis of something which calls to mind another idea, it cannot merely be the manifold of intuition, but rather this manifold which has been synthesised in some way.

makes sense to talk about recognising a singular instance of properties *before* conceptualising it *as an instance of* the property? Upon reflection, we find that nothing about the distinction between an intuitive versus a discursive mark overcomes the objection we posed – namely, it does not explain how it is possible to recognise a mark (be it intuitive or discursive) at the pre-conceptual level.

4. Objective Validity

We must now relate this to our discussion on objective validity. We saw earlier that the problem with the objective validity of empirical concepts was that empirical concepts have a receptive element. This means that there is something about the very sensations themselves, over which we have no control, that partly determine which concept the sensations get subsumed under. The process of this subsumption is – according to Kant – comparison, reflection, abstraction of the marks of our appearances. But, we now revealed how at the level of intuitions, or from amongst our manifold of intuition, there can never be a recognition of similarity or difference because these can only be recognised conceptually – that is, Kant’s ‘marks’ cannot serve as the basis upon which one can discriminate between one’s manifold of intuition. These marks are, further, crucial in Kant’s account because it is on the basis of these marks that I judge that my representation ought to fall under the concept X and not Y. But if, in the creation of empirical concepts, I do not relate to my marks conceptually (this would make the argument circular for we are trying to give an account of the *emergence* of the empirical concept), which means that I do not relate to marks at all (because marks can only be related conceptually as they are done in general categorisation, not transcendental), what does this mean about the security with which I can be sure that my object is in fact an X and not a Y? It is true that we still do use empirical concepts, *de facto*; that is, although the argument has shown that Kant’s account of empirical concept formation is circular it has not thereby disproven, or even attempted to disprove, the self-evident fact that we *do* use empirical concepts. However, it has left us without an account of how the subsumption of appearances under concepts is meant to express a *necessary unity*; and without such an account the certainty with which I can know that my object is *in fact* an X and not a Y seems to be diminished.

We should also note that this problem is precisely the result of the receptive component of cognition. These were problems which we did not encounter in the

transcendental deduction, that is, in an area where Kant could use the apperceptive approach for explaining the combination of intuitions. There, it was merely a question of the self-ascription of representations, *regardless* of their character. But the receptive element of empirical concepts means that the apperceptive approach is not available to us when dealing with the necessary unity of these concepts. Because, *if* the unification of appearances is done *regardless* of the character of these appearances, whatever object we are left with after any such unification must be an object which is indeterminate as to its content. That is to say, that through the apperceptive approach we may only ever obtain a transcendental object or, what is the same, the general mark of truth; which is to say what every object *must* be like for it to be an object, and not what it happens to be like because of its specific character. When we deal with empirical concepts, on the other hand, and therefore have to account for the *receptive* element of our representation, we have this seemingly unbridgeable gap whereby we have to move from the non-conceptual to the conceptual which also means that we have to presume some form of recognition of particulars amongst our representations without these particulars being particulars of a universal. The threat to objective validity results because objective validity requires a rule governing the subsumption of appearances under concepts. This ‘rule of apprehension’ furthermore was revealed to depend on the marks – it told us which marks to regard and disregard. But, we now revealed that these marks cannot be the bases upon which we see similarity or difference because these marks presuppose a conceptual mode of relating to the world. But if we lose that upon which the rule depends for its subsumption of appearances under concepts, we also lose the rule itself, and thus we no longer know whether our empirical concepts contain under them a necessary unity of appearances.

Conclusion

Our criticism of Kant and Nietzsche's accounts of concept formation brings to a conclusion Part Three of our study which has focused on Nietzsche's early epistemology. I have attempted to provide a new critical assessment of Nietzsche's epistemological claims made in his early period. I, moreover, demonstrated how Nietzsche's claims in this field grow out of concerns and problems within the transcendental tradition. We saw, for example, how Nietzsche's acceptance of the neglected alternative implied that his alleged metaphysical correspondence theory of truth could only, intelligibly, be taken to attack the recognisable justifiability of our knowledge claims, not their truth component. Furthermore, we argued that Nietzsche's vacillation between a Kantian and a Schopenhauerian position on the type of reality we ought to assign appearances displayed an ambivalence in his attitude regarding whether the reality of appearances is undermined because of a lack of guarantee of correspondence to the thing-in-itself. This led us to Chapter 7, where I considered the role of the concept in experience and argued for why I believe Nietzsche's early error theory to be attacking the discursivity of our understanding, as falsifying a world of primary impressions. In response to this, I considered Nietzsche's position on the possibility of non-conceptual cognition, claiming that in order for Nietzsche's criticism to be cogent, he would need to subscribe to the possibility of non-conceptual experience of the world. However, we found that Nietzsche took a Kantian position on this, meaning that he wholly endorses the discursivity thesis – a fact which I argued undermines the strength of his argument. What emerges from this part of our study is a picture of Nietzsche as someone whose epistemological concerns in his early period are firmly rooted in Kant's philosophy and that his own position is one which attempts to navigate through problems inherent in the former whilst still retaining certain basic commitments to the Kantian project. Importantly then, we saw that the most serious objection to Nietzsche's account in this early period is one which he inherited from Kant's conception of empirical concept formation.

As we will see in Part Four of our study, Nietzsche continues, even in his late period, to be concerned with basic problems in Kant's epistemology. Specifically, we will find that

Nietzsche, in following Schopenhauer and the German idealists, proceeds to critique Kant's conception of the thing-in-itself.

PART FOUR: LATE NIETZSCHE

Introduction

The aim of Part Four (and Chapter 9) is to consider Nietzsche's rejection of the concept of the thing-in-itself in his late period writings. We are interested in seeing the basis on which Nietzsche rejects – as incoherent – the very idea of an object existing in and of itself. His attacks on this concept, from epistemological considerations,¹⁴⁰ are launched from a variety of different angles; at times Nietzsche rejects the idea of something possessing a constitution in itself,¹⁴¹ at other times he attacks the idea of an object existing without being in (causal) interaction with other objects,¹⁴² and lastly, he sometimes rejects, as unintelligible, the idea that there could be any such thing as an object without some kind of perspective on it.¹⁴³ It is beyond the scope and intention of this chapter to consider the nuances of each position and how they relate to each other. Rather, I wish to focus on the last of the aforementioned lines of criticism, in which we also find Nietzsche's own epistemology of perspectivism. Its claim is, in essence, very similar to the Schopenhauerian one which avers that to be an object is to be an object for a subject. We shall explore this line of argument to see firstly, why Nietzsche identifies the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object and secondly, why *non-perspectival object* is, according to him, an unintelligible concept. If Nietzsche is correct on these two points he may have dealt a

¹⁴⁰ Note that some of Nietzsche's most pertinent and poignant criticisms against the concept of metaphysical truth, or a metaphysical realm, are directed at the type of values that such beliefs are indicative of. Thus, his criticisms against the thing-in-itself are not merely from epistemological considerations alone. Indeed, I would agree with Peter Poellner, who maintains that the most enduring, original, and interesting attacks by Nietzsche on concepts such as an 'in itself' or a 'metaphysical world' are to be found in his association of these concepts with some form of *ressentiment* against life, as captured in his concept of the ascetic ideal (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 117). Undoubtedly, these remain Nietzsche's most original contributions to the history of philosophy, but it is important to recognise firstly, that Nietzsche also has epistemological reasons for rejecting such concepts, and secondly (and importantly for our purposes) that far from the picture which is often portrayed of him as a philosopher who was unconcerned with classical epistemological, metaphysical and ontological questions, we will find that in these respects Nietzsche remained firmly rooted in Kant's philosophical tradition of transcendental idealism.

¹⁴¹ WP 559, WP 560.

¹⁴² WP 557.

¹⁴³ WP 556, WP 560, BGE 16.

crucial blow to Kant's thing-in-itself. To consider the success of Nietzsche's arguments requires us to re-visit Kant on the issue of the possibility of thinking the concept of the thing-in-itself. We will then turn to consider, and defend our position against, a certain line of argument through which it may appear as if our proposed reading of Nietzsche's rejection of the thing-in-itself rests on a conflation between epistemological and ontological claims. Having defended Nietzsche's rejection of the thing-in-itself through his perspectivism, I will finally consider whether his perspectivism does not itself, in fact, presuppose the need and ability to refer to, and make sense of, the idea of a reality 'in itself'. Specifically, we will see that Nietzsche's equation of the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object presupposes the receptivity thesis with regard to our intuitions; and *this* thesis, we will demonstrate, requires and presupposes the concept of the thing-in-itself. Ultimately we will find, as we did in Chapter 5 on Schopenhauer's critique of Kant's inference to the thing-in-itself, that Nietzsche, likewise, fails to move out of the shadow cast by Kant's thing-in-itself.

CHAPTER 9: Perspectivism and the Rejection of the Thing-in-Itself

1. Thing-in-Itself = Non-Perspectival Object

We may begin by noting some different formulations by Nietzsche of ways in which he attempts to reject as incoherent – or unintelligible – the idea of the thing-in-itself through an epistemology of 'perspectivism', that is, the subject-dependence of the object. Consider the following formulations by Nietzsche:

(1) "A 'thing-in-itself' just as perverse as a 'sense-in-itself', a 'meaning-in-itself' [...] The question 'what is that?' is an imposition of meaning from some other viewpoint. 'Essence', the 'essential nature', is something perspectiv[al] and already presupposes a multiplicity. At the bottom of it there always lies 'what is that for *me*?' (for us, for all that lives, etc.) A thing would be defined once all creatures had asked 'what is that?' and had answered their question. Supposing one single creature, with its own relationships and perspectives for all things, were missing, then the thing would not yet be 'defined'. In short: the essence of a thing is only an *opinion* about the 'thing'. Or rather: 'it is considered' is the real 'it *is*', the sole 'this *is*' (WP 556 [1885-6], last two emphases mine).

(2) "That things possess a constitution in themselves quite apart from interpretation and subjectivity, is a quite idle hypothesis: it presupposes that interpretation and subjectivity are not essential, that a thing freed from all relationships would still be a thing" (WP 560, [1887]).

(3) "To think away the subject - that is to represent the world without a subject: is a contradiction: to represent without representation" (KGW V.1.10. quoted from Poellner article pg.91).

And lastly:

(4) "But I will say this a hundred times: 'immediate certainty,' like 'absolute knowledge' and the 'thing in itself' contains a *contradictio in adjecto*" (BGE 16).

Nietzsche's claim in these passages is two-fold: firstly, that the thing-in-itself must be thought of as a non-perspectival object, and secondly, that the 'perspectival' property of

objects is an ineliminable feature of them, and that *non-perspectival* objects are, *ergo*, impossible. Let us take these questions in turn. In this section we will explore Nietzsche's rationale for equating the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object.¹⁴⁴ Clearly, in order to assess whether Nietzsche succeeds or fails in rejecting the thing-in-itself through a claim that non-perspectival objects are impossible, a prior task is to determine on what basis Nietzsche equates the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object. Kant himself did not formulate the concept in these terms, so it would seem reasonable to ask why Nietzsche formulates it as such.

We may recall from chapter 2: 5 that, in the Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant defined things-in-themselves as “things when they are considered in themselves through reason, i.e., without taking account of the constitution of our sensibility” (A28/B44). We find, towards the end of the Transcendental Analytic, a similar formulation of the concept of a noumenon in the negative sense, where Kant says “If by a noumenon we understand a thing **insofar as it is not an object of our sensible intuition**, because we abstract from the manner of our intuition of it, then this is a noumenon in the **negative** sense” (B 307).¹⁴⁵ The thing-in-itself, then, is the object as it is *independently* of the contribution of our *a priori* forms of intuition. But, as we saw in Ch. 2.3, this raises the question of whether ‘independently of the contribution of our *a priori* forms’ ought to be read as *definitively lacking* those forms or merely as expressing an impossibility regarding our ability to justifiably ascribe our *a priori* forms to reality in itself not; in short, the question is whether Kant is justified in claiming that things-in-themselves are necessarily *non-spatiotemporal* (Kant’s ontological denial of space). As we argued, Kant believed that we can justifiably deny spatio-temporality of reality in itself. Kant’s reasoning for this was an alleged incompatibility which he believed to obtain between our possession of an *a priori* truth

¹⁴⁴ In the following section we will consider his arguments to the effect that objects are necessarily subject-implying.

¹⁴⁵ N.B. the equation of noumenon in the negative sense with the thing-in-itself (and contrasted with noumenon in positive sense) was established in Ch. 3: 5.

about the world, and that truth being instantiated in the world in and of itself.¹⁴⁶ Although we may disagree with Kant's ontological denial, it ought to be clear why on his account we must at least *think* the thing-in-itself as being "outside" space and time. For, if we can know that we bring certain features to the world, the question becomes, how are we to think of that which remains once we abstract our contribution to objects? Presumably we must think of it as devoid of that which we bring to experience, even if it is logically possible for that thing to possess, in and of itself, the determinations which we bring. Or again, if we wish to consider the object as it is in itself, and we know at the same time that our cognition/perspective brings certain determinations to experience, then we must abstract the contribution of our cognition/perspective from objects. The thing-in-itself is precisely the thing as it is when it is *not* mediated by the subject's cognition. Thus, the viability of Trendelenburg's neglected alternative does not change our conception of the thing-in-itself insofar as we are giving an account of the emergence of objective experience. In order for us to justifiably think the thing-in-itself through space and time, we must either possess intellectual intuition¹⁴⁷ or we must be able, through the neglected alternative, to establish that the thing-in-itself definitively *is* spatio-temporal. But, that we do not possess intellectual intuition seems uncontroversially true; and the neglected alternative makes no positive claim as to the nature of the thing-in-itself – it rather rules out our ability to make any such claims. But in the absence of these alternatives, if we were to think of the thing-in-itself as spatio-temporal, it would seem as if we would have little ground for the thing-in-itself vs. appearance distinction. We would, in fact, find ourselves back on realist grounds.

But what has been said so far seems to merely force the point that we must think of the thing-in-itself as "outside" *space and time*, not that we must think of it as outside a *perspective*. But, the link between the two is a short step; for, what is the most basic

¹⁴⁶ C.f. Ch. 2: 3.2 and A48/B66. Note that we ultimately found Kant's ontological denial to be unjustified.

¹⁴⁷ Note that for a subject with intellectual intuition, the object would only exist insofar as it is thought by the subject. Thus, whatever determinations the subject brings to the object pertains to the object both as experienced and as it is in itself.

feature of our perspective on which all cognition of objects depends? Phrased differently, what constitutes our perspective on objects? The answer is, of course, spatio-temporality; space and time are the forms which our perspective brings to objects; indeed, they are what *constitute* our perspective. Therefore, to abstract space and time is precisely to abstract the perspective. In abstracting space and time from our representation of any object, we in fact abstract our perspective on that object; for we cannot imagine any other way of having a 'perspective' on an object, other than that perspective (and therefore also the object) being a spatio-temporal one. To re-iterate, we know that our perspective has certain *a priori* determinations through which we *must* experience any object. If we wish to consider the object as it is in itself, independently of the contribution of our cognition, we must think of it as independent of the forms of our cognition – that is, we must subtract the contribution of our cognition *to* objects, *from* objects. But since we know that these determinations are inextricably tied up to our perspective, in order to consider the thing-in-itself we must think of the object as it is from no perspective (insofar as we cannot imagine any perspective other than our spatiotemporal one). Thus, it seems that spatio-temporality cannot be abstracted from our conception of perspective whilst still leaving us with a determinate thought of the concept of 'perspective'. That is, we find the concepts of space and time to be *essential* to the concept of perspective, to the extent that the latter cannot be thought without the former. In abstracting spatio-temporality, we abstract our perspective.

We can see that Nietzsche's equation of the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object is argued for in two steps: firstly, the thing-in-itself, as that which grounds our phenomenal objects, must be thought of as independent of the contribution of our cognition to objects. This contribution (of sensibility) is the forms of space and time. The thing-in-itself must, therefore, be thought of as non-spatio-temporal. Secondly, we found the concepts of space and time to be essential to the concept of perspective, and that to

abstract space and time from objects is to abstract our perspective on objects. Thus, if the thing-in-itself is to be thought of as independent of space and time, it must also be thought of as independent of perspective.

2. Perspectival Character of Objects

Having laid out Nietzsche's rationale for equating the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object, we may return to consider the quotations provided above, and see on what basis Nietzsche believes that the subject-implicating property of objects is an ineliminable feature of them.

As is not uncharacteristic of Nietzsche, we find his claims regarding the alleged perspectival nature of objects as mere assertions with very little, if any, argumentation offering reasons for why objects are necessarily perspectival. Let us therefore try to unpack what the rationale behind these claims might be. The first thing to note is that Nietzsche's perspectivism is inseparably connected to a commitment on his part to a representational account of objecthood. Much like Schopenhauer, for Nietzsche, to be an object is to be an object of representation for a subject. To claim that "'all truth about the world is perspectival' would [...] amount to the claim that, necessarily, all true thoughts (beliefs, etc.) about the world represent it *as represented*" (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 90); meaning that implicit in the content of every claim about the world is that that claim is being made from a certain perspective; or, phrased differently, that the content of any judgment about the world implies a subject who is making the judgment, and thus, that even the *very conception of an object* is subject-implicating. Whenever we perceive, or even conceive of, an object, we necessarily assume a certain point of view or perspective on it. In cases of perception this is clearer and more obvious, but even when we consider an object in thought alone, we are thinking of the object from 'our' perspective. Indeed, we

cannot consider what the object would be like without a subject because in the very act of entertaining the thought of the object *at all*, we are assuming a perspective on it. Therefore, to think of the object without a subject is something that Nietzsche sees as a contradictory demand.¹⁴⁸

But, we may ask, on what basis should we accept this claim? In what way are we to understand the claim that the subject resists any attempts at being abstracted from our conception of an object?

The issue is that, in one sense, Nietzsche's claim is manifestly false. I can, for example, imagine many objects to myself without co-representing other subjects, or even myself, as part of the representation. For example, I can imagine a mountain-side scenery which may include in it the representation of myself or that of other subjects. *However*, it seems that I can just as easily represent the mountain side without my 'self' (or other selves) being part of that which is represented to me (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 92). Thus, it appears as if my representation of an object does not necessarily require me to also co-represent any subjects. Now, although this point is true, it seems to miss the mark, or it at least does not seem to tackle the same issue to which Nietzsche is drawing attention. Nietzsche's point is rather that in any representation (visual or otherwise), *the content* of my representation (of an object) "*implies* a subject while not necessarily *co-representing* it" (Ibid.). This becomes evident when we try to perceive or imagine any object. We find that our object is always represented from a certain perspective; that is, the content of my representation has characteristics which mark it as represented (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 91). Thus, if I am (visually) imagining a building, I represent it in my imagination from a certain angle, distance, etc. Or again, as Poellner suggests, if I imagine a sculpture in a tactile mode, I am still representing resistances from the object from a certain point of view, or from several different points of view (Poellner,

¹⁴⁸ WP 560 & KGW V.1.10.

Perspectival Truth, 2001, p. 94). The point is that, regardless of the specific sensory modality, at any given time that I am representing the object, I do so from a certain point of view/perspective, even though I can continually change my standpoint and experience the object from more perspectives. Thus, Nietzsche's claim is not the uncontroversially true claim that every representation must imply a subject – a claim which is straightforwardly true. His claim is rather that through the necessarily perspectival mode in which any content of my representations appears to me, this content is marked out as being a representation; that is, the fact that I always find the content of my representation presented from a certain perspective means that the *content itself* is subject-implying (not merely that the concept of a representation is subject-implying).

It would seem, however, that the argument above is open to an intuitive and common-sense objection; namely: can we not discount these features from our object? (Poellner, Perspectival Truth, 2001, p. 94). Moreover this seems to be precisely what we do in our everyday experience of objects in distinguishing between what we judge to be part of the object as such, and what we consider to be a mere result of our particular spatio-temporal perspective on it. For example, if I am looking down at the ground from an airplane, I visually experience cars as appearing to be extremely small – they may appear to be a mere fraction of the size of my own body. However, I do not proceed from this observation to conclude that the cars which I am observing are, *in fact*, miniscule. Rather, I attribute the appearance to this effect to my spatio-temporal location with respect to the cars and conclude that the appearance of 'relative smallness' is not a property of the objects as such, but rather pertains to my current perspective on them. Now, although it is true that in our experience of objects, we constantly discount certain subjective features which we (for the most part correctly) assign to our specific perspective, we only ever do this on the basis of the availability of *another perspective*; that is, in discounting a certain property from an object as such, we do so because we know that *through another perspective* (or through several other perspectives), the object does *not* possess the

properties under consideration. Thus, we can say that we may discount certain features of objects which, as we continually move and shift our perspective, we find to be lacking in our more adequate representations of the object. It is precisely because of this ability to continually shift my perspective that I can eventually judge which features I should attribute to the object as such, and which features I should recognise to be dependent on my specific spatio-temporal positioning.¹⁴⁹ However, and this is what Nietzsche is really bringing attention to, throughout all of these different perspectives, through which I come to revise my conception of which features belong to the object and which ones are due to myself and my position, I am always experiencing the object from a given perspective. The significance of this is that it reveals to me that the very perspectival feature of objects is not something which I can discount from the object. The perspectivalness of objects is that feature of them which I always, invariably and inevitably, find co-instantiated every time I imagine or perceive an object. Now, if I try to abstract this very perspectivalness from the object, that is, if I try to abstract the perspective, I find that I am no longer *thinking of*, or perceiving, any object at all.¹⁵⁰

But this argument seems to make a leap from the impossibility of imagining to the impossibility of thinking, which might suggest an equation of the two terms – an equation which could be objected to. The question is whether all thought must necessarily involve imagining. Of course, in one respect, thinking and imagining are different and I may think certain ‘items’ without imagining them. This is perhaps the case with numbers, where if I am involved in arithmetic calculation (such as $8+5=13$), I do not, necessarily, imagine eight dots and then five dots, which I add together to imagine thirteen dots. That is, I can think about numbers without imagining objective instantiations of the numbers. Although this is

¹⁴⁹ Thus, it is not the case that we cannot separate or create a distinction between “the *object* conceived and the object *as conceived by us*” (Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 1995, p. 83).

¹⁵⁰ As Poellner notes: “When we ‘deduct’ the perspectivalness from our representation – unlike when we discount (say) its fragmentariness – the object does not remain over: the ‘representation’ ceases to represent any possible particular. Hence the incoherent nature of such an attempt to ‘represent without representation’” (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 95).

true, the case under consideration is not enough to counter Nietzsche's claim, which is really a claim about thought about (*outer*) *objects*. His claim is that to *think* an *object* is to *imagine* that *object*, in some sense. Thus, we may say that numbers can be entertained in pure thought alone, but insofar as they are to relate to objects, we must think of a given *quantity* of objects, and the latter act, Nietzsche believes, requires imagining of some sort. Poellner traces Nietzsche's view to an essentially empiricist line of thought which broadly claims that "all non-logical, object-referring terms are dependent, either immediately or indirectly, on a sensory or quasi-sensory acquaintance with particulars" (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 92). According to Poellner, for Nietzsche, in order for us to be able to think a particular object means that we must ultimately be able to think an instantiation of the object in imagination and that without such an ability our 'terms' are empty (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 93).¹⁵¹ Indeed, Nietzsche's claim seems intuitively both plausible and convincing insofar as we may feel a sense of puzzlement over what it would mean to think an outer object without, however minimally, imagining a specific instantiation of that object. Moreover, it should be clear that the non-perspectival object, our phenomenal object abstracted from our cognition, must be thought of as an outer object and not merely as a non-object referring logical term such as a number; that is to say it must be *imagined*.^{152 153}

¹⁵¹ In support of this, Poellner gives examples where Nietzsche expresses scepticism over our ability to understand the concept of force in the absence of our ability to "'imagine' the 'quality' it purportedly refers to" (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 93 & WP 621).

¹⁵² I shall return to the issue of the possibility of thinking the thing-in-itself in the next section.

¹⁵³ Interestingly, and not uncommonly in much of Nietzsche's thought, we find his general claim already expressed in Schopenhauer's writings. In the second volume of *WWR*, as pointed out by Poellner, we find the following passage:
 "Let a person attempt to present vividly to his mind the time [...] when he will be dead. He then thinks himself away, and allows for the world to go on existing; but soon, to his own astonishment, he will discover that nevertheless he still exists. For he imagined he made a mental representation of the world without himself; but the I or ego is in consciousness that which is immediate, by which the world is first brought about, and for which alone the world exists. This centre of all existence, this kernel of all reality, is to be abolished, and yet the world is to be allowed to go on existing; it is an idea that may, of course, be conceived in the abstract, but not realized. The endeavour to achieve this, the attempt to think the secondary without the primary, the conditioned without the condition, the supported without supporter, fails every time, much in the same as the attempt fails to conceive an equilateral right-angled triangle, or an arising and passing away of matter, and similar

3. Possibility of Thinking the Thing-in-Itself

The conclusion drawn by Nietzsche seems, however, to be contrary to Kant's claims about the thing-in-itself. Specifically, we can see that Nietzsche's argument makes a claim to the inconceivability of the thing-in-itself, or rather, that we cannot actually *think* of the object as it is in and of itself. Kant, however, would disagree with this. It is therefore worth considering Kant's position on this to see whether or not Kant has an argument which Nietzsche may have overlooked.

Kant would claim that there is no conceptual contradiction in thinking the concept of the thing-in-itself. As Allen Wood notes, "[Kant] seems to regard it as entirely permissible and even inevitable that we should be able to *think* the phenomenal objects around us solely through pure concepts of the understanding, hence as they are in themselves. If I arrive at the concept of the chair in the corner first by cognizing it empirically and then abstracting from those conditions of cognition, so that I think of it existing in itself outside those conditions, then it is obvious that I am thinking of the same object, not of two different objects" (Wood, 2005, p. 70). Wood is, in this passage, discussing a specific difference between the one-world and two-world interpretations of the relation between things-in-themselves and phenomena, but what is interesting for our purposes is that he lays out, correctly I believe, what Kant saw as the possibility of thought about things-in-themselves. Henry Allison, in making a similar point, claims that "the cognitive vacuity of a consideration of things as they are in themselves does not amount to incoherence. That would only be the case if the understanding could not even *think* things apart from the conditions of sensibility, which Kant repeatedly affirms we can" (Allison, 2004, p. 56). In fact, Kant seems to think that the thought of things-in-themselves is a necessary thought which we are led to when we consider objects of experience as

impossibilities" (Schopenhauer, WWR 2, 1958, pp. 486-7; also quoted in Poellner, Nietzsche and Metaphysics, 2001, p. 82).

appearances. “In fact, if we view the objects of the senses as mere appearances, as is fitting, then we thereby admit at the very same time that a thing in itself underlies them, although we are not acquainted with this thing as it may be constituted in itself, but only with its appearance, i.e., with the way in which our senses are affected by this unknown something. Therefore the understanding, just by the fact that it accepts appearances, also admits to the existence of things in themselves, and to that extent we can say that the representation of such beings as underlie the appearances, hence of mere intelligible beings, is not merely permitted but is unavoidable” (Prolegomena 4:315).¹⁵⁴ Kant’s point seems to be that the thought of an object, as it is in itself, is a necessary thought insofar as we recognise that our cognition has certain forms which it brings to objects. The acceptance of our possession of *a priori* determinations which we bring to objects, leaves us, Kant believes, necessarily with the thought of these objects as abstracted from our contributions to them. Thus, the thought of the thing-in-itself, far from being an impossible thought, is, for Kant, a *necessary* one.

But what we have argued so far does not seem in any way to prove that the thought of such objects is possible. By analogy, we may think of the tendency of reason, that, given a set of conditions, it will seek out the unconditioned; yet this tendency of reason does not imply any possibility of it thinking such an object. Since we know that the thing-in-itself must be thought of as lacking spatio-temporality, the question is whether the categories, void of spatiotemporality (and therefore all empirical intuitions too), or what is the same, the unschematised categories, can be used to think an object?

Kant, himself, seems to say at several points that the categories apart from

¹⁵⁴ Again, in ‘On the Ground of the Distinction’ Kant says that “it follows from the concept of an appearance in general that something must correspond to it that is not in itself appearance, for appearance can be nothing for itself and outside of our kind of representation; thus if there is not to be a constant circle, the word ‘appearance’ must already indicate a relation to something the immediate representation of which is, to be sure, sensible, but which in itself, without this constitution of our sensibility (on which the form of intuition is grounded), must be something, i.e., an object independent of sensibility” (A251-252).

intuitions lack meaning (Gardner, 1999, p. 281). In 'On the Ground of the Distinction' Kant says that, without the possibility of being met with an object in intuition, the concept "has no sense, and is entirely empty of content" (A239/B298). Again, a few lines down, he says that "it is also a requisite for one **to make** an abstract concept **sensible**, i.e., display the object that corresponds to it in intuition, since without this the concept would remain (as one says) without **sense**, i.e., without significance" (A240/B299). Thus, we ought to ask, does this not, as suggested by Gardner, "[rule] out as strictly meaningless his own claims that things in themselves exist"? (Gardner, 1999, p. 281). On Gardner's reading, Kant's claim that the categories, void of intuitive content, are without sense (or empty of content) does not amount to the claim that we cannot *think* objects merely through the categories, but rather that in isolation from sensibility, the categories cannot be used to give us *cognition* of objects (Gardner, 1999, p. 282). Thus, through the categories alone, it is not the *thought* of objects which becomes impossible, but rather their *cognition*.

But although we may have established what Kant sees as a possibility regarding the thought of things-in-themselves, the question still remains whether such thought is *actually possible*. Kant, seemingly, believes that although I cannot have *cognition* of objects through mere concepts, I can however think of phenomena as abstracted from the contribution of sensibility, through pure concepts alone. It would therefore seem apposite to consider Kant's own distinction between thought and cognition. We will then be in a better position to consider whether the demand to think the thing-in-itself is a contradictory one or not.

Kant states in the preface to CPR that "even if we cannot **cognize** these same objects [appearances] as things in themselves, we at least must be able to **think** them as things in themselves" (B xxvi). To this, Kant adds the following footnote to clarify the difference between cognizing and thinking an object. He says: "To **cognize** an object, it is required that I be able to prove its possibility (whether by the testimony of experience from its actuality or *a priori* through reason). But I can **think** whatever I like, as long as I do

not contradict myself, i.e., as long as my concept is a possible thought, even if I cannot give any assurance whether or not there is a corresponding object somewhere within the sum total of all possibilities" (B xxvi footnote).¹⁵⁵ His point seems to be that in order to have cognition of a real object my concept must be capable of being met with in intuition - that is, it must be possible that something given to me in intuition can be objectively united under the concept in question. However, in order to think about an object, all that is required is that my concept not be a contradictory one. Thus, for example, although I do not have cognition of a unicorn, I may very well entertain the idea of such a being, because there is nothing contradictory about combining the concepts of 'horse' with that of 'horn', whereas in the case of a 'square triangle' I cannot even think the object, for I cannot imagine *any way* in which the two concepts may be combined in one concept. The question then is whether Kant's concept of a thing-in-itself is like that of a unicorn or of a square triangle.

We know that Nietzsche believes the very thought of the concept of a thing-in-itself to be a "contradiction in terms",¹⁵⁶ meaning that what it asks for cannot be coherently imagined. Let us attempt to re-construct Nietzsche's argument so that it tackles Kant's formulation directly. As we mentioned earlier, it is a central part of Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism that space and time are *mere* forms of appearances.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, we should recall from chapter 2: 2.1 that the non-spatiotemporality of the thing-in-itself is also necessary for Kant's refutation of idealism in the Fourth Paralogism. There, it is precisely because Kant does *not* treat things-in-themselves as spatio-temporal objects which he believes enables his theory to avoid the charge of the skeptic that all we are aware of are contents in our minds and that we therefore cannot be sure there is an

¹⁵⁵ Again in 'On the Ground of the Distinction <A>' Kant says "To be sure a pure use of the category is possible, i.e., without contradiction, but it has no objective validity, since it pertains to no intuition that would thereby acquire unity of the object" (A253).

¹⁵⁶ C.f. BGE 16

¹⁵⁷ C.f. Ch. 2: 1.

outside world.¹⁵⁸ But, if we know that, for Kant, the thing-in-itself must be thought of as being non-spatiotemporal and that it must therefore also lack any schematized categorial determinacy (for the schematized categories rely on spatio-temporal intuitions), and finally and most importantly, bearing in mind that space and time are necessary conditions for the representation of any objects, how precisely can we legitimately say that the thought of a thing-in-itself is a possible one?¹⁵⁹ If we take our ordinary conception of any determinate object, abstract from it whatever secondary qualities it may possess such as colour, hardness, etc., and then abstract from it its extension in space and its persistence through time, in what way can we say that I may think of whatever is 'left' as being 'causal', 'substantial', and 'qualitative'? That is, if I abstract extension in space and persistence through time from my concept of any object, have I not in the process abstracted the most essential components of the object? Does any meaning attach to the claim that whatever I am left with at the end of this process of abstraction can be thought of as merely categorial? How, for example, can the concept of substance be *thought* (not merely cognised) if not through a spatio-temporal 'something' which endures, though its accidents may change? How can I *think* the concept of causality, unless I think of necessity pertaining between two or more spatio-temporal objects?¹⁶⁰ It appears that whatever Kant's claim that the categories by themselves can have 'logical use' amounts to, it cannot be the case that they can, by themselves, abstracted from our *a priori* forms of space and time, be used to think any object. The categories, insofar as they are thought, are thought as applying to spatio-temporal objects, and if I abstract space and time from my object and wish to consider it non-spatiotemporally, I must also consider it as void of categorial determinacy.

¹⁵⁸ See A372 and Allison pg. 24.

¹⁵⁹ It may be objected that Kant never claims that space and time are necessary for the thought of objects, but only for their representation. However, it was pointed out in Ch. 4: 1 that the first two arguments of the 'Metaphysical Exposition' attempted to demonstrate precisely that we cannot represent the lack of space *in thought*, or again that insofar as we think any outer object, we must necessarily think it as being spatial. Insofar as we do not do this, we do not in fact think of any object. C.f. Ch. 1: 4.1 for an account of the arguments of the 'Metaphysical Exposition'.

¹⁶⁰ In both examples, if the items to which we are referring are in inner sense (such as pains, feelings, etc.), I must minimally think them as at least being bound by the condition of temporality.

When discussing the differences between the one-world and two-world views, Gardner makes a similar point. There, he says that “because transcendental reflection considers things as they are known to us, i.e. as appearances, it obliges us to consider them also as they are in themselves. But it is not clear what significance attaches to the methodological directive to consider things in abstraction from cognition, for it is not clear why subtracting relation to cognition should be thought to leave any object of thought or reference at all to be considered. Why should considering empirical objects minus cognition be any more contentful than considering them minus their existence, or considering the number 2 with its property of evenness cancelled?” (Gardner, 1999, p. 293). The passage highlights an important point and relates back to our question whether the concept of the thing-in-itself is like that of a unicorn or of a square triangle. That Gardner gives the analogy to a consideration of the number ‘2’ without its property of evenness suggests that what we are asked to consider in thinking the thing-in-itself is a *contradictory* concept. And if we establish that the concept is a contradictory one, then we have established, *on Kant’s own terms*, that we cannot think the concept as we are asked to do. In fact, we may say that in the very demand to think the thing-in-itself, Kant is “offering us a concept with one hand whilst denying us the possibility of making determinate sense of the concept with the other” (Houlgate, Kant, Nietzsche and the 'Thing in Itself', 1993, p. 124).¹⁶¹ For, what we are being asked to do is to think an object, while at the same time being told that we cannot think of it along any of the determinations of 'objecthood'. By objecthood we mean the general mark of truth, which is to say the transcendental object – that is, a wholly categorial item to which any object must conform insofar as it is to be an object of cognition. But we know from Ch. 3.3 that the transcendental object is a wholly categorial object *precisely because* it unites spatio-temporal intuitions under apperception. That is, it is only because spatio-temporal intuitions must be ascribed to the same identical ‘I’, and that such self-ascription occurs judgmentally, that Kant can claim that the most minimal

¹⁶¹ Houlgate, in this passage, extends the claim, correctly I believe, to Nietzsche as well.

form of unification is a categorial one.¹⁶² Thus, the transcendental object, or the general mark of truth or 'objecthood' (these terms can be used interchangeably) requires spatio-temporal intuitions which it synthetically unites under apperception.¹⁶³

Thus, the more we consider the concept of the thing-in-itself, the more we find that we cannot in fact think the concept at all. As Poellner notes in making a slightly different, though related, point, "we cannot even think of the thing in itself as a *something*, an 'object in general', unless we are prepared to consider it as an item to which some predicates and, hence, some 'concepts of the understanding' apply" (Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 1995, p. 291).¹⁶⁴ The question facing Kant, as pointed out by Houlgate, is the following: "is it actually legitimate to use a concept, but to declare in the same breath that one does not intend that concept to be understood in any ordinary sense? Furthermore, is it legitimate to leave the sense in which such a concept *is* to be understood indeterminate – or, at least, insufficiently determinate – or does not the ordinary sense of the concept constantly reassert itself in the absence of any determinate alternative?" (Houlgate, *Kant, Nietzsche and the 'Thing in Itself'*, 1993, p. 126). Does not the very process of arriving at the thought of a thing-in-itself leave us without any object to consider? Despite Kant's insistence that we can think things-in-themselves, I believe that Nietzsche has latched onto a contradictory demand by Kant; namely, that at the outset of Kant's theory, we are asked to entertain and make use of a concept which we are incapable of thinking; moreover, that the impossibility of thinking this is something with which Kant, given his distinction between thought and cognition, ought to agree. It is therefore

¹⁶² Indeed we may ask, what can the understanding unite under the 'I think' (apperception) if not spatio-temporal intuitions?

¹⁶³ As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, it is precisely the concept of the transcendental object which we think when considering the thing-in-itself in Kant's (*and Nietzsche's*) accounts of cognition.

¹⁶⁴ Poellner is here making the point that, if the thought of the thing-in-itself is to be an intelligible one, we must assume some logical laws as pertaining to the concept, such as the law of non-contradiction (Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 1995, p. 291). This is epistemically more modest than the claim we are making, which is that these logical laws require spatio-temporal intuitions in order to be used for the thought of objects, and that, therefore, abstracted from space and time, the forms of thought cannot be used to think any objects.

tempting to conclude (in agreement with Nietzsche) that the thought of the thing-in-itself, is, in fact, an incoherent one.

4. Epistemology vs. Ontology

We must now turn to consider a specific objection which may be raised against our reading of Nietzsche's rejection of the thing-in-itself through a claim about the necessary perspectival feature of objects. We may recall that Nietzsche's rejection of the thing-in-itself, from epistemological and metaphysical considerations, results from an alleged contradiction involved in the idea of something being an object in itself, that is, Nietzsche argues against the possibility of an object existing without it being an object for a subject. The point was that the property or feature of 'perspectivalness' (or of 'being-for-a-subject') seemed to be incapable of abstraction from our conception of an object. If we, therefore, find that our very concept of an object in general contains the property of being-for-a-subject, we may say that we cannot abstract the subject and yet be left with an object. But, we know that the concept of the thing-in-itself is precisely the concept of an object as it is when it is *not* for a subject. But since being-for-a-subject is an ineliminable feature of what it is to be an object, we may say that the concept of a thing-in-itself is a wholly vacuous concept, one which does not refer to anything and which is incapable of being coherently thought.

An objection which may occur to one is that the argument above has made a leap from an epistemic restriction to a claim regarding ontology. Could it not be the case, for example, that a non-perspectival object reflects merely an inability by us to imagine such a thing, but that this must not be taken to imply an ontological impossibility in a metaphysical sense? This does not, of course, mean that there necessarily *are* non-perspectival objects, but it points to the epistemically more modest thesis that we cannot

know whether there are things-in-themselves, and, moreover, that we cannot determine what is possible in a metaphysical sense based on our finite form of cognition. Thus, so the argument goes, what Nietzsche's argument really highlights is a necessary epistemic condition, required by us, for the imagining of any object. However, it does not follow from this alone that what is possible for our imagination must also exhaust the possibilities of being *tout court*. It would appear, in fact, that in our everyday dealings with the world, we often recognise that the limits of our imagination do not place limits on the possibilities of being. There are many things which I may not be able to imagine simply because I lack the cognitive power to do so, and yet I do not, in these instances, take the limitations of my cognition to imply that the content of the judgment under consideration expresses an impossible state of affairs. Let us, for example, consider the judgment 'There are approximately 7 billion persons in the world' – I take this judgment to be both possible and true. But it is obvious that if I try to represent to myself in my imagination 7 billion discrete individuals, I will undoubtedly fail. Or again, we may think of the concept of a chiliagon; it is clear that I cannot imagine a polygon containing 1,000 sides, and yet I do not take this to indicate a metaphysical impossibility, but rather a limitation of my imagination (Poellner, *Perspectival Truth*, 2001, p. 97).

But a more careful attentiveness to the argument should reveal that there is a crucial asymmetry between the counter-examples provided and the case under consideration (the subject-implying aspect of objects). The difference is that whereas in the former cases we are dealing with a mere limitation of the power of our intellect, in the latter case we are dealing with something analogous to a conceptual contradiction, insofar as what it demands cannot be coherently thought. In fact, Nietzsche explicitly states in BGE 16 that "the 'thing in itself' contains a *contradictio in adjecto*" (BGE 16). That Nietzsche sees the thing-in-itself, which he equates with a non-perspectival object, as a contradiction in terms is of utmost importance in understanding the distinction between the examples

provided. If we look at the proposition ‘there are approximately 7 billion persons in the world’, there is nothing in the terms of the judgment which would necessarily rule out their combination in a categorical judgment of the kind presented above. We do not encounter any contradiction in combining the concepts of ‘7 billion people’ and ‘inhabiting the world’. However, in the case of a judgment such as ‘there are non-perspectival objects’ (or there are things-in-themselves) there is, according to Nietzsche, a contradiction in *the very terms* of the judgment. Presumably, then, Nietzsche wants to claim that if we consider the concept of an object closely, we find that it includes in it, the property/concept of ‘being-for-a-subject’, meaning that if we deny the subject/perspective-implying property of an object, we deny the object altogether. Thus, in the case under consideration, we find that the concepts under question (‘non-perspectival’ and ‘object’) cannot be combined because of the principle of contradiction. We recall from Ch.1.2, that Kant defines the principle of contradiction as “the proposition that no predicate pertains to a thing that contradicts it” (A151/B190) and it is this principle, according to Kant, which governs analytic judgments. The proposition ‘non-perspectival objects are possible’ is necessarily false on this construal because the predicate of non-perspectivalness, putatively, contradicts the concept of an object, for implicitly contained in the latter is the concept of perspectivalness. Thus, we may say that for Nietzsche the concept of a non-perspectival object is *implicitly analytically impossible*;¹⁶⁵ or to put it differently, that the judgment ‘all objects are perspectival/subject-implying’, is implicitly analytically true.¹⁶⁶

In light of these discussions, let us return to the objection posed against Nietzsche.

The objection claimed that our inability to imagine a state of affairs must not, and in our

¹⁶⁵ We may contrast implicit analyticity with explicit analyticity which we find in a judgment such as ‘all bachelors are unmarried’. In the case under consideration we find that objects seem to *imply* a subject of experience, even though this character of being-for-a-subject is clearly different, as far as its inseparability from the object goes, from the inseparability of the concepts ‘bachelor’ and ‘unmarried man’.

¹⁶⁶ Note that Nietzsche must be making the claim to analyticity insofar as he claims that a thing-in-itself is a contradiction in *terms*. Although he would undoubtedly claim that this truth is knowable *a priori* too, his phrasing intimates that we are dealing with a conceptual impossibility - suggesting that he believes the claim to be not merely *a priori* true, but also analytically true.

everyday life often *does* not, indicate a metaphysical impossibility. But, given the distinctions drawn between the examples, whereby it was revealed that Nietzsche's claims relate to conceptual impossibilities whereas the counter examples were dealing with mere limitations of the power of imagination, we may ask what the position of the realist would amount to if he wished to remain wedded to his objection that non-perspectival objects, though unimaginable by us, can exist. It would amount to nothing less than the claim that analytic judgments do not express a necessary unity of the subject and predicate, in all possible worlds; or to phrase it more intuitively, the realist must be claiming that there could be a world wherein the proposition 'Fx and not-Fx' can represent a state of affairs. The problem with this position is that it seems to strip the concept of impossibility from any application to the world. We may ask, is it not precisely in cases of conceptual contradiction that we correctly believe the demand under consideration to be impossible? Poellner explains this point well when he says: "Does not the only ground we have for regarding some proposition which purports to describe a state of affairs in the actual world and which is of the form '*p* and not-*p*' as necessarily false, and the state of affairs it purportedly represents as impossible, lie in the fact that we find it 'subjectively' more and more difficult and puzzling to combine its component meanings, the better we come to understand them, in the manner we are asked to combine them?" (Poellner, Nietzsche and Metaphysics, 1995, p. 85). To what can the term 'impossible' be applied if not to logical/conceptual impossibilities? It would appear that if we wish to continue making sense of the idea that the term 'impossible' has *any* application to the world whatsoever, then the strongest candidates for what we consider to be impossible are precisely those judgments which violate the law of non-contradiction. And to claim that there can be a world wherein the law of non-contradiction does not apply, cannot be taken to be making any intelligible claim whatsoever – insofar as what it demands, is precisely *unintelligible*.

4.1. Leiter *contra* Poellner

Let us now turn to a separate, though related, objection to the reading of Nietzsche's perspectivism we have presented. The argument currently under consideration, as posed by Brian Leiter, although not coined in these terms, avers that Poellner's account of Nietzsche's perspectivism rests on a conflation between epistemology and metaphysics. Leiter focuses on OGM III; 12 – one of the few passages in the published writings where Nietzsche refers to his perspectivism. There Nietzsche says:

“From now on, my dear philosophers, let us beware of the dangerous old conceptual fable which posited a ‘pure, will-less, painless, timeless knowing subject’, let us beware of the tentacles of such contradictory concepts as ‘pure reason’, ‘absolute spirituality’, ‘knowledge in itself’; - for these always ask us to imagine an eye which is impossible to imagine, an eye which supposedly looks out in no particular direction, an eye which supposedly either restrains or altogether lacks the active powers of interpretation which first make seeing into seeing something – for here, then, a nonsense and non-concept is demanded of the eye. Perspectival seeing is the *only* kind of seeing there is, perspectival ‘knowing’ the *only* kind of ‘knowing’; and the *more* feelings about a matter which we allow to come to expression, the *more* eyes, different eyes through which we are able to view this same matter, the more complete our ‘conception’ of it, our ‘objectivity’, will be. But to eliminate the will completely, to suspend the feelings altogether, even assuming that we could do so: what? Would this not amount to the *castration* of the intellect?...” (OGM III; 12).

Leiter reads this passage, and Nietzsche's perspectivism through it, as making a claim regarding the impossibility of *knowledge* of the thing-in-itself, not regarding the impossibility of its *being*. According to him “Knowing could be perspectival in the sense

described here, but truth might not be" (Leiter, 2002, p. 270). He furthermore argues that in OGM III; 12, Nietzsche is juxtaposing himself to Schopenhauer, for whom, according to Leiter, knowledge is not necessarily perspectival (Leiter, 2002, p. 271). Of course, we saw earlier that Schopenhauer, in fact, makes a claim to the necessity of the subject in much the same way as Nietzsche does, but – as is rather common with Schopenhauer – he often oversteps limitations he lays down himself when speaking about ways in which we may come to experience the world in its noumenal character. In the current context, Leiter is, I believe correctly, highlighting what Nietzsche sees as an inconsistency on Schopenhauer's part regarding the need for the subject in aesthetic experience. As Janaway puts it, Nietzsche is, in this passage, trying to show that "Schopenhauer's last (Platonic) refuge from the will is here explicitly blocked" (Janaway, Nietzsche, the self, and Schopenhauer, 1991, p. 127). But if we turn to Leiter's original point, is it true that on our reading, we have misinterpreted a rather modest and seemingly uncontroversial claim regarding the inability to have non-perspectival knowledge (knowledge of things-in-themselves) in terms of a much more controversial claim regarding the impossibility of such objects existing at all?

Although it is certainly true that in OGM III;12, Nietzsche is making a claim regarding the impossibility of non-perspectival knowledge, the belief that the implications of this claim are restricted to epistemological ones seems to overlook what I believe Nietzsche sees as a necessary consequence of the Kantian philosophy. Indeed, we can say that Nietzsche *is* in fact involved in collapsing ontology into epistemology and that he is, at least in this respect, taking the results of Kant's philosophy more seriously than Kant himself. For Nietzsche, the subject-implying nature of objects is what collapses truth into knowledge, or more specifically, it collapses being into being-for-a-subject. We can see this in quote (4) provided earlier from BGE 16. There Nietzsche claims that 'absolute knowledge' (which we may equate with *knowledge of the thing-in-itself*) like '*the thing in itself*', contains a contradiction in terms. If we bear in mind that Nietzsche equates the

thing in itself with a non-perspectival object, we may say that for Nietzsche, in BGE 16, non-perspectival knowledge and non-perspectival being are both contradictions in terms. Thus, to claim that Nietzsche's perspectivism is merely a claim regarding epistemology, is to miss the very link between epistemology and ontology which perspectivism is trying to make explicit; that 'to be' is 'to be possible to be known'; that to be an object means to be an object of possible experience. We find this exact link between epistemology and ontology drawn in the following passage from WP, where Nietzsche begins with the claim that the thing-in-itself is unknowable and finishes with the claim that it cannot *be*:

"The biggest fable of all is the fable of knowledge. One would like to know what things-in-themselves are; but behold, there are no things-in-themselves! But even supposing there were an in-itself, an unconditioned thing, it would for that very reason be unknowable! Something unconditioned cannot be known; otherwise it would not be unconditioned! Coming to know, however, is always 'placing oneself in a conditional relation to something' – one who seeks to know the unconditioned desires that it should not concern him, and that this same something should be of no concern to anyone. This involves a contradiction, first, between *wanting* to know and the desire that it not concern us (but why know at all, then?) and, secondly, because something that is of no concern to anyone *is* not at all, and thus cannot be known at all. –" (WP 555).

We find that, in one respect, Nietzsche's point is in fact a very Kantian one, but one which takes the conclusion regarding the limits of the possibility of experience even further than Kant, and proceeds to claim that beyond the realm of possible experience we cannot cognise, posit, or even refer to anything. The problem with Leiter's formulation, whereby a distinction is drawn between what we can possibly know to be the case and what actually *can be* the case (state of affairs), is that it assumes the possibility of referring to a 'reality' in which none of our concepts have any application. But such a conception of reality, which is tantamount to the concept of the thing-in-itself (that is, an object which lacks all marks of

objecthood) is, as we have argued, a wholly vacuous concept. As we argued earlier, it is a 'something' which cannot be thought. Poellner makes a similar point when he says that if we cannot predicate anything of a certain alleged 'object' (granting this term for now), then we may say that we have absolutely no understanding of what the concept refers to; that is, "if none of our concepts could be appropriately applied to reality in itself, none of us could have any idea what we are speaking of when uttering the sounds 'thing in itself'" (Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 1995, p. 291). Leiter's formulation of a distinction between epistemology and ontology rests on the presupposition that we may intelligibly refer to a 'reality in itself' or an 'object in itself' – which is to say a reality lacking precisely those features which make it *real*, or an object which lacks the very features of *objecthood*. What Nietzsche's perspectivism is attempting to highlight is the subject-implying, that is, the cognizer-implying, nature of what it means to *be* an object. This is also why the passages quoted above WP 556, WP 560, and KGW V.1.10, make a claim to the perspectival nature of not merely knowing, but also of *being*. It should be noted that Leiter's reading of Nietzsche's perspectivism as attacking our ability to *know* the thing-in-itself, is a position which does find support in Nietzsche's middle period writings. In an oft-quoted passage from HH, we find an allusion both to Nietzsche's perspectivism and to the impossibility, according to Nietzsche, of attaining knowledge of the world in and of itself.

"It is true, there could be a metaphysical world; the absolute possibility of it is hardly to be disputed. We behold all things through the human head and cannot cut off this head; while the question nonetheless remains what of the world would still be there if one had cut it off" (HH 9).

However, by the time of his later writings, Nietzsche seems to have pushed the conclusions of Kant's critical philosophy even further, and much like other post-Kantians before him (Fichte, Hegel, Schopenhauer), he proceeds to criticize what he calls "The sore spot in Kant's philosophy [which] has gradually become visible even to dull eyes: Kant no longer

has a right to his distinction 'appearance' and 'thing-in-itself' (WP 553).¹⁶⁷ Note that Nietzsche's attack here is not merely directed at any alleged *knowledge* of the thing-in-itself. Rather, we find that Nietzsche is, in following Jacobi, questioning our ability to legitimately make use of the very idea of the thing-in-itself in accounting for the origin of cognition. In this respect, Nietzsche places himself on similar ground as the prominent post-Kantians mentioned above, and especially Schopenhauer, who – as we saw – criticized Kant on this very same point. But importantly, we found that although Schopenhauer, following Jacobi, had picked up on a tension in Kant's philosophy, his own account failed to engender a viable alternative theory of the emergence of objective experience. The question facing us now is: does Nietzsche succeed in giving an account of cognition which does not rely on, or make any use of, the concept of the thing-in-itself? Or does his perspectivism, itself, not seem to presuppose that we must, however minimally, be able to refer to a reality *in itself*?

5. Nietzsche's Need for the Thing-in-Itself

We have, thus far, operated with a specific conception of the thing-in-itself which we must now make more explicit. In our account, Nietzsche has equated the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object – that is, with an object as it is abstracted from and independently of, any subject of knowledge. Although such an equation may seem natural, a closer examination will reveal that it only attacks *one* conception of the thing-in-itself. More importantly, this conception is one which *presupposes* the thing-in-itself in another sense. The issues which we must determine are the following: What, if anything, does Nietzsche's

¹⁶⁷ We should note that in the passage quoted here Nietzsche is not criticising the concept of the thing-in-itself as incoherent per se, but rather pointing to the problem of affection. If we recall that Kant arrived at the thought of the thing-in-itself in two ways: one through the receptivity thesis and one through the thought of these same objects as abstracted from what we know of them *a priori*; we can say that whereas Nietzsche's perspectivism attacks the latter conception of the thing-in-itself, the current passage (WP 553) attacks the inference to the thing-in-itself as grounding our intuitions.

equation of the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object tell us about his theory of cognition? More specifically, does the fact that Nietzsche equates the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object tell us anything about his commitments as to the type of intuitions (sensible/receptive or intellectual/spontaneous) we possess?

We saw in Section 2 that Nietzsche's equation of the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object was down to a belief that our form of cognition/perspective has certain *a priori* determinations which it brings to experience. To think of the object as it is in itself, therefore, requires us to abstract the contribution of our cognition, that is to say, to abstract our perspective. If the thing-in-itself is that 'thing' which exists independently of our cognition and grounds our cognition of objects, then we must conclude that this 'thing' exists independently of our forms of cognition, and indeed of the whole of our cognitive perspective. But to think of an object from no perspective at all, Nietzsche argued, is an impossible demand.

But what we must consider now is whether this is the only way in which we may think of the concept of the thing-in-itself. We may agree with Nietzsche that for beings such as us, to consider the thing-in-itself means to consider the object as it is abstracted from our perspective and therefore all the determinations which our perspective brings; that is, for us, it is tempting to equate the concept of the thing-in-itself with the concept of a non-perspectival object (which then Nietzsche shows to be a contradiction, because of the subject-implying property of every object). However, what if we consider a subject whose form of cognition is fundamentally different from the one which we possess; specifically, what if we entertain the idea of a being with intellectual/original intuition? We saw in chapter 3: 5 that for such a being, the acts of thinking and intuiting would be one and the same and that such a subject would *give itself* objects through the mere act of thinking them. In such a case, what the object is *for the subject* and what it is *in itself* amounts to one and the same thing; in fact the object is only in itself insofar as it is for the subject. As

we may recall from chapter 3: 5, the object of experience for such a subject we may call a noumenon (in the positive sense). A noumenon in the positive sense is an object insofar as it is an object for a subject with intellectual intuition,¹⁶⁸ and for such a subject the appearance vs. in-itself dichotomy vanishes; the object is only in-itself insofar as it is an appearance for the subject. Thus, in this case we find that the perspective of the subject is absolutely necessary for the subject's cognition of the object in itself. In fact, it is only *because* of the perspective that the subject can come to know the thing-in-itself.

But we may ask, how is this relevant to Nietzsche's criticism? And is this a problem for Nietzsche? At first glance it would appear that the point raised is irrelevant to Nietzsche's concerns. For, regardless of whether for a being whose intuitions are intellectual, knowledge of the thing-in-itself implies a subject, for beings like *us* (whose intuitions are receptive) the thing-in-itself would still amount to a non-perspectival object. Thus, it would appear as if Nietzsche's argument is left intact. However, upon closer inspection, it should be clear that Nietzsche's position involves a glaring contradiction – a paradox which cannot be reconciled. We have established, thus far, that Nietzsche's equation of the thing-in-itself with a non-perspectival object is apt insofar as we are considering what the thing-in-itself would be like for beings like ourselves, namely for beings who possess *a priori* forms of cognition to which the ontologically independent 'given' component of experience (receptive intuitions) must conform. Thus, in order to be claiming that the thing-in-itself is a non-perspectival object, Nietzsche must be assuming that all possible intuitions are sensible and therefore receptive, and that the *forms* of intuition bring something *to* experience which, in some sense, 'mediate' reality in itself. But, we ought to ask, what precisely does it mean to claim that or intuitions are receptive? Or rather, and perhaps more accurately and to the point, what does the thesis of the receptivity of our intuitions presuppose? The answer is, of course, *the thing-in-itself*! That is, it is only insofar as we

¹⁶⁸ A noumenon in the positive sense is defined by Kant as "an object of a non-sensible intuition [...] namely intellectual intuition" (B 307)

assume that some *x* exists mind-independently of us and grounds our intuitions that we can say that our intuitions are receptive. Moreover, it is only on the basis of the receptivity thesis that we can claim that the thing-in-itself must be a non-perspectival object, and lastly, it is on the basis of *this* that Nietzsche claims that the concept of the thing-in-itself is a contradictory one (because of the subject-implying property of any object). Thus, Nietzsche's problem eventually faces us as the following paradox: that it is on the presupposition that there is some mind-independent reality (*in itself*) that we find the concept of mind-independent reality to be an incoherent one.

It might be objected that, strictly speaking, Nietzsche's and Kant's theories do not require the thing which grounds our cognition to be mind-independent *tout court*, but rather that it must only be independent of *our* minds. On such a construal, it would seem as if the two senses of mind-independent used in the above passage are not congruent with each other. For, in the first instance 'mind-independent' is being used to refer to an object existing independently of *our* minds (but which could nonetheless be in God's mind, as Berkeley would argue), whereas in the second instance the mind-independent thing is meant to be independent of all possible minds. Thus, Nietzsche's argument does not involve a straightforward contradiction. However, a serious textual problem faces this interpretation. The difficulty is that neither Kant nor Nietzsche would venture to claim that the thing-in-itself as the ground of cognition exists because it is perceived by God or any other possible subject. Both would undoubtedly claim that the thing-in-itself as the ground of phenomena, exists independently of all minds. In the case of Nietzsche especially, I do not think that in his entire *oeuvre* the idea is ever expressed that that thing which provides us with the raw material for cognition, exists in the mind of some other subject. Thus, we simply lack the relevant evidence to be able to ascribe such a belief to Nietzsche. In light of this, it is clear that for him, the mind-independent reality which grounds our phenomenon is to be understood as independent of all possible minds, as is the object as considered

independently of our perspective. The paradox, therefore, is not exorcised through a re-conception of the minimal commitments of the receptivity thesis.

5.1. Nietzsche's Receptivity Thesis

I now wish to draw out the position which I have attributed to Nietzsche regarding his acceptance of the receptivity thesis, and moreover that this acceptance presupposes or makes use of the idea of metaphysical truth.

In giving a reading of Nietzsche's falsification thesis, Stephen Houlgate, raises a similar objection to Nietzsche regarding his attempt (which Houlgate sees as an unsuccessful one) to twist free of Kant's concept of the thing-in-itself (Houlgate, Kant, Nietzsche and the 'Thing in Itself', 1993, p. 115)¹⁶⁹. Houlgate brings up this point with respect to how we are to understand the idea, found throughout Nietzsche's published and unpublished writings from all periods, that we impose our forms of experience onto things. As Houlgate phrases the problem: "The central paradox for Nietzsche's philosophy is that he clings to a version of Kant's idea that the forms generated by human thought and perception are quite different from the things they are put into, whilst, at the same time, he rejects the corresponding Kantian idea that the things into which we put those forms must be thought to have a nature and constitution of their own *in themselves*" (Houlgate, Kant, Nietzsche and the 'Thing in Itself', 1993, p. 118). Although Houlgate focuses on Nietzsche's claims regarding our falsification of reality through imposition of *a priori* forms, the same claim can be drawn out with respect to Nietzsche's perspectivism. Once again, does it not seem not merely natural, but also necessary, to assume that if our object is perspectival, then there must be some mind-independent 'thing' *on which* we have a perspective?

¹⁶⁹ Although I believe that Nietzsche's error theory labels our knowledge illusory from more than just a metaphysical correspondence theory, as shown in earlier chapters, and also as shown by M.S. Green, I believe that Houlgate's central point, which is one regarding Nietzsche's reliance on the concept of the thing-in-itself, is very much a valid one.

The answer is: not necessarily. There *is* a way through which the two positions could be reconciled, but it is a route which Nietzsche, like Schopenhauer, is unwilling to take. For, the idea that our object is *merely* perspectival, that what we place our forms into is *not* something-in-itself, could be reconciled on an idealist interpretation; or one which claimed that our intuitions are intellectual and spontaneous. Poellner considers precisely such a possible reading of Nietzsche's claim that we somehow 'create' our objects of experience.¹⁷⁰ On this point, Poellner asks: are we to interpret individuals as "agents or quasi-monadic entities who are not acted on at all by anything ontologically independent of them, but some of whose auto-produced representational contents *appear* to them as ontologically independent objects acting on them?" (Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 1995, p. 192). The question, re-phrased in our terms may simply be stated as: Should we assume that we, as subjects, possess intellectual intuition as opposed to sensible intuitions? Not only do we find no claims to this effect by Nietzsche, but as pointed out by Poellner, any such ascription to Nietzsche contradicts numerous passages where Nietzsche is intimating that our forms of experience order or structure something which is not supplied by us (Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 1995, pp. 193-4). In WP 515, for example, Nietzsche says "Not 'to know' but to schematize - to impose upon chaos as much regularity and form as our practical needs require" (WP 515), a formulation which suggests that some mind-independent reality in itself affects or provides us with the raw material which we schematize through our forms of intuition and thought. We find similar claims in WP 520 and GS 111, where the principle of identity and the process of concept formation are traced to their practical utility in assisting the species. Elsewhere, Poellner claims, regarding the link between Nietzsche's epistemology and idealism, that although the term 'idealism' is a bit ambivalent, because of the various ways in which the term has been used, he believes it is clear that Nietzsche certainly is not an idealist in the sense of Fichte or Hegel, whereby objects are produced by, or emanate from, the subject (Poellner,

¹⁷⁰ Note that this is similar to Houlgate's idea of imposing forms onto objects.

Perspectival Truth, 2001, p. 110). For Nietzsche, Poellner claims, "Subjects do not 'produce' objects but find themselves *passive* in relation to their recalcitrant presence in sense-experience" (Ibid.). Houlgate makes a claim to the same effect when he says that "Nietzsche may be a subjectivist, but he is not an utter idealist. He may think that all the forms in terms of which we think are fictions, but he does not think that the very idea of there being something *other* than us - nature, chaos, the all - is a mere fiction" (Houlgate, Kant, Nietzsche and the 'Thing in Itself', 1993, p. 135).¹⁷¹

Taking Poellner and Houlgate's readings together, which I believe (at least in this respect) are making the same point, it seems clear that Nietzsche certainly remains wedded to the receptivity thesis; which is to say that he relies, in one form or another, on the idea that we must make use of the concept of a reality in itself, independent from our perspective and interests, which somehow exists in itself, and which through its 'affective powers' (however we are to understand these terms) on us, provides us with the raw material for experience. The point is summarized very neatly by Poellner who states that "the concept of perspectival truth in fact tacitly presupposes that of truth in a metaphysical sense. Perspectivism, if it is to be coherent, does not ultimately conflict with or rule out the latter notion, but rather involves a particular kind of metaphysics, although, if our reading is correct, this is contrary to Nietzsche's intentions" (Poellner, Nietzsche and Metaphysics, 1995, p. 297). What I wish to have demonstrated in this chapter is not only the truth of this claim, but also the further point that Nietzsche's rejection of the thing-in-itself through his claim to perspectivism, involves an assimilation of the concept of the thing-in-itself to that of non-perspectival objects. Furthermore, this assimilation is only possible on the assumption that our intuitions are receptive/sensible; and lastly, that this assumption

¹⁷¹ Arthur Danto makes a similar point when he says: "Nevertheless, Nietzsche could not quite bring himself to the point of becoming an idealist, for whom there is no world outside the articulations of the mind. Nor could he quite become a phenomenalist, believing that whatever is finally meaningful can be expressed in terms of our own [sense] experience. He could not do this because he felt, and not so differently from either Kant or Spinoza, that there was a world which remained over, tossing blackly like the sea, chaotic relative to our distinctions and perhaps to all distinctions, but there nevertheless" (Danto, 1965, p. 96).

depends on, and presupposes the ability to refer to, the concept of a reality or object, in itself – an ability which the argument is meant to demonstrate as an impossibility.

6. Thing-in-Itself vs. Transcendental Object

I would lastly like to turn to a certain puzzlement which one may sense with the account presented of Nietzsche's perspectivism. A potential question of concern with the account presented may be to wonder: how is it that Nietzsche's position makes use of a concept which it alleges to be a contradictory one? That is, how can the concept of the thing-in-itself play *any* role in Nietzsche's account of cognition if, according to Nietzsche, we cannot in fact *think* the concept at all? This is, of course, a question which one could pose to Kant as well.

We may recall Poellner's claim which stated that "we cannot even think of the thing in itself as a *something*, an 'object in general', unless we are prepared to consider it as an item to which some predicates and, hence, some 'concepts of the understanding' apply" (Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 1995, p. 291). The claim, I believe, draws attention to what we ordinarily *do* think when we are considering the thing-in-itself - which is, we think of the *transcendental object*.¹⁷² We think of the concept of an indeterminate object as such, a something in general = x. But, we know from our discussion in Ch. 3.3 that the transcendental object, as the general mark of truth, is precisely that to which *every* object must conform in order to be a possible object of cognition. Furthermore, as we argued in Ch. 3.3 and in Section 4 of the present chapter, the wholly categorial nature of the transcendental object is due precisely to the judgmental self-ascription/unification of spatio-temporal intuitions to the same and identical 'I'. We furthermore demonstrated (in

¹⁷² Note: this is not a claim made by Poellner.

Section 4) that to abstract these marks/categories from the object leaves us with the thought of no object to consider whatsoever; that is, more than it merely being the general marks of truth for *cognition* of objects, the determinations of the transcendental object are those which we must assume to hold insofar as we are to even *think* any object at all. But this means that the concept of which we make use in thinking of the origin of cognition is precisely the opposite of what we are asked to think; that is, we think of an object which is substantial (insofar as properties can inhere in it), is causal (in that it has a reason for its being and necessarily acts on, and is acted upon by, other objects), has some quality, has unity, and - most importantly (and as presupposed by all the previous properties) - is extended in space and persists through time.¹⁷³

Thus, when considering the role of the thing-in-itself in any receptivity thesis, whether it be Kant's, Schopenhauer's, or Nietzsche's, we may say that we are really considering the concept of an object or a something in general = x, viz. the transcendental object. It is only on this basis that we so much as even make any in-road into either theory of cognition. Where we are meant to use the concept of that thing which lacks all the marks of objecthood, we instead employ the concept of that which bears all the general marks of objecthood. This leap of reason seems to be necessitated by any form of transcendental idealism which on the one hand remains committed to the receptivity thesis¹⁷⁴ whilst, on the other, refuses to claim that the ontological ground of our phenomenon exists as perceived by some other mind (God, Descartes' evil demon, etc.,).

¹⁷³ On the difference between thing-in-itself and transcendental object, we should turn to 'On the Ground of the Distinction <A>'. There Kant equates the concept of a noumenon with that of a thing-in-itself when he says that the concept of a noumenon is "the thinking of something in general, in which I abstract from all form of sensible intuition" (A252). Kant is here, specifically referring to a noumenon in the negative sense, but the distinction between the positive and negative senses of noumenon is one which is only made explicit in the B-edition (although it is still visible in the A-edition too). A few lines down, Kant says that "the object to which I relate appearances in general is the transcendental object, i.e., the entirely undetermined thought of a something general. This cannot be called a **noumenon**; for I do not know anything about what it is in itself, and have no concept of it except merely that of the object of a sensible intuition in general, which is therefore the same for all appearances" (A 253).

¹⁷⁴ We may wonder what, if anything, remains of transcendental idealism if we reject the receptivity thesis, which is to reject the thing-in-itself.

Furthermore, if we also wish to reject the problematic idea that we produce objects from within ourselves, it seems we must accept the existence of some wholly mind-independent reality. If the positing of mind-independent 'things' as the grounds of phenomena is, furthermore, to be distinguished from common sense realism whereby spatio-temporal objects produce sensations in us which are qualitatively identical with those entities themselves, then we must assume that those entities are either (a) non-spatiotemporal or, more modestly, (b) that we do not know how we are to think of them, but certainly that they are in some respect 'different' from those items to which we refer in everyday experience. The first of these positions is Kant's and Schopenhauer's, the second one Nietzsche's. What should be clear is that on either construal we are forced to rely on the concept of a thing-in-itself as an object as it is independently of our cognitive perspective's contribution – a demand which upon reflection we find to be an unintelligible one. Moreover, in place of the thing-in-itself (which we cannot think) we use the concept of the transcendental object.

In fact, it is worth turning to *CPR* to see exactly when Kant first introduces the thought of things-in-themselves as the ground of appearances. We find this commitment in the very opening passage of the B-Introduction. Kant begins:

"There is no doubt whatever that all our cognition begins with experience; for how else should the cognitive faculty be awakened into exercise if not through objects that stimulate our senses and in part themselves produce representations, in part bring the activity of our understanding into motion to compare these, to connect or separate them, and thus to work up the raw material of sensible impressions into a cognition of objects that is called experience. [...] But although all our cognition commences **with** experience, yet it does not on that account all arise **from** experience" (B1).

Kant sets out his commitment to the receptivity thesis without any argumentation whatsoever. Furthermore, his appeal to the receptivity thesis seems to get its intuitive

support from the empirical (or realist) consideration that spatio-temporal objects, in some sense, affect us. Thus, the reader who is confronted with this claim at the very outset of Kant's theory, cannot but think of things-in-themselves as a something in general = x, that is, an empirically indeterminate transcendental object. But, by the time the reader learns that the thing-in-itself, namely that thing which "stimulate[s] our senses", "produce[s] sensations" and "bring[s] the activity of our understanding into motion" (B1), is to be thought of as being non-spatiotemporal,¹⁷⁵ the spatio-temporal replacement which has been used up to this point has already done most of the work for Kant. Thus, after considering an indeterminate spatio-temporal object which grounds our intuitions, we are then told that this 'thing' must, in fact, be non-spatiotemporal. Of course, Nietzsche's perspectivism is open to a similar charge; namely, that his refusal to claim intellectual intuition for us, means that his perspectivism must assume the existence of some 'thing'-in-itself *on which* we have some perspective. And it is only on this assumption that we find the idea of non-perspectival objects to be an incoherent one. In either account, it seems that if we wish to resist the claim that we produce objects from within ourselves, we are inevitably faced with the need for a concept which we cannot think.

Conclusion

I have attempted, in this final chapter of the study, to reveal Nietzsche's ongoing involvement with epistemological concerns arising out of the Kantian philosophy. The objective of Chapter 9 was to demonstrate how Nietzsche, in following Schopenhauer, attempts to reject the 'sore spot' in Kant's philosophy, namely the problematic concept of the thing-in-itself, and in so doing places his own epistemology firmly within the bounds of Kantianism. What is especially interesting, and which to my mind is a testament to the profundity of Kant's thought, is that the most serious problem with his philosophy, namely

¹⁷⁵ A42/B59

the reliance on the thing-in-itself, seems to be an insurmountable problem. As we have seen, the commitment by both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche to the receptivity thesis together with their commitment to the idea that our cognitive perspective has *a priori* forms which we bring to experience, meant that their accounts, too, had to presuppose the ability to refer to and make use of the idea of a reality in itself; that is, their commitments made the impossible thought of the thing-in-itself, an inevitable one, and although they both draw attention to a definite problem in the Kantian philosophy, neither manages to incorporate a solution to the problem into their own accounts of experience.

CONCLUSION

We have now reached the end of our study. In the course of this thesis I hope to have demonstrated and brought to light Nietzsche's continual involvement and concern with epistemological issues arising from the Kantian philosophy. Through a reading of, firstly, Kant's epistemology as found in CPR and, secondly, Schopenhauer's divergence from the former as found in WWR, I hope to have brought to light certain problematic claims in the Kantian philosophy and demonstrated how Nietzsche's epistemological claims were often indicative of an involvement on his part with the doctrine of transcendental idealism.

I would finally like to note that I have not attempted nor intended to provide an exhaustive account of either Nietzsche's error theory or Nietzsche's criticisms of metaphysical truth. Regarding the error theory, Nietzsche formulates it in various ways throughout his intellectual career and it is doubtful that all of his formulations can be read according to the interpretation provided here. However, I believe that the account presented in this study offers enough textual and argumentative support to justify our reading of the early error theory. Regarding Nietzsche's criticism of the thing-in-itself, I concede that Nietzsche's position is more multi-faceted than our account has, perhaps, suggested. Nietzsche's attacks on notions such as metaphysical truth are often launched from non-epistemological considerations such as scrutinising the type of valuation of life that belief in a metaphysical world is indicative of. At other times, Nietzsche rejects the thing-in-itself through a form of indifferentism towards that which must lie beyond the realm of possible experience. And even from epistemological considerations, as we mentioned at the start of Chapter 9,¹⁷⁶ Nietzsche attacks the thing-in-itself with different

¹⁷⁶ See Part Four 'Introduction'.

arguments. Here, as in other places, I have been forced to choose one prominent area or strand of thought to focus on. I believe, however, that an examination of these other arguments can also reveal interesting continuities between Nietzsche's epistemology and his philosophical predecessors.

Finally, I hope that my study has, more than merely locating Nietzsche's epistemology within the Kantian system, also vindicated Kant's philosophical position over those of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. This is not, of course, to say that I believe Kant's critical system to be void of problems – far from it. It also does not mean that I view Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's criticisms as completely misplaced. In fact, I believe that many of the criticisms highlighted by the latter two are legitimate concerns about genuine problems in the Kantian system. However, I believe that neither Schopenhauer nor Nietzsche ever manages to overcome these problems by incorporating a solution into their own accounts of cognition. Thus, I find Nietzsche's error theory, both in the early and late periods, as making little coherent sense. One significant problem, which I did not consider because of its already detailed treatment by others, is the problem of self-reference.¹⁷⁷ The very claim that all our truth-claims are false (which Nietzsche avers in his early error theory), seems very simply to collapse any distinction between truth and falsity, and itself presupposes that some of these claims are true. A second problem, as we mentioned in our thesis, is the futility of making some unattainable realm the benchmark for truth, whether this be the thing-in-itself or a world of primary impressions. In this respect, I believe Arthur Danto's remark regarding Nietzsche to be highly incisive when he says that "To some extent [Nietzsche] was seduced by his own arguments. Because he wanted to say that all our beliefs are false, he was constrained to introduce a world for them to be *false about*" (Danto, 1965, p. 96).

¹⁷⁷ (Poellner, Nietzsche and Metaphysics, 1995, pp. 288-305).

Regarding the criticism of the concept of the thing-in-itself, I believe that both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche have good grounds and arguments for reproaching the Kantian philosophy; however, neither manages to provide an account of experience which ceases to presuppose the ability to refer to a mind-independent object. The problem, as we saw, was that insofar as both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche work *within* the Kantian system, and therefore take a most basic assumption of this theory for granted – namely the receptivity thesis – they require the concept of the thing-in-itself. Thus, we find that we have come full circle once again to Jacobi's incisive criticism levelled against Kant, but we can now see that it applies equally to both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche as well. And this criticism, which highlights both the need for the thing-in-itself and its illegitimate use given the strictures laid down by the Kantian philosophy, is summarized by Jacobi in the simplest of terms, namely, that: "Without this presupposition I could not enter the system, and with this presupposition I could not remain in it" (Jacobi quoted in Janaway, 1989, p. 70).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allais, L. (Forthcoming). *Reality of Appearances*.
- Allison, H. (2004). *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Anderson, R. L. (2005). Nietzsche on Truth, Illusion, and Redemption. *European Journal of Philosophy* , 185-225.
- Andresen, J. (2010). Truth and Illusion Beyond Falsification: Re-Reading On Truth and Lie in the Extra -Moral Sense. *Nietzsche-Studien* 39 , 255-281.
- Ansell-Pearson, K., & Large, D. (Eds.). (2006). *The Nietzsche Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Bailey, T. (2006). After Kant: Green and Hill on Nietzsche's Kantianism. *Nietzsche-Studien* , 228-262.
- Berkeley, G. (2004). *Principles of Human Knowledge and Three Dialogues*. London: Penguin Books.
- Bird, G. (2006). *The Revolutionary Kant: A Commentary on the Critique of Pure Reason*. Chicago and La Salle: Open Court.
- Breazeale, D. (Ed.). (1979). *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*. (D. Breazeale, Trans.) Amherst: Humanity Books.
- Cassam, Q. (2003). A Priori Concepts. In H.-J. Glock (Ed.), *Strawson and Kant* (pp. 87-108). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Clark, M. (1990). *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Collins, A. (1999). *Possible Experience: Understanding Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dancy, J., Sosa, E., & Steup, M. (Eds.). (2010). *A Companion To Epistemology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Danto, A. (1965). *Nietzsche as Philosopher*. New York: Macmillan.
- Davidson, D. (1969). True to the Facts. *Journal of Philosophy* , 748-764.
- Gardiner, P. (1963). *Schopenhauer*. Bristol: Thoemmes Press.
- Gardner, S. (1999). *Kant and the 'Critique of Pure Reason'*. London: Routledge.

- Ginsborg, H. (2006). Thinking the Particular as Contained in the Universal. In R. Kukla, *Aesthetics and Cognition in Kant's Critical Philosophy* (pp. 35-60). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Green, M. S. (2002). *Nietzsche and the Transcendental Tradition*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Guyer, P. (2006). *Kant*. New York: Routledge.
- Guyer, P. (1987). *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Guyer, P. (1999). Schopenhauer, Kant, and the Methods of Philosophy. In C. Janaway (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer* (pp. 93-137). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Guyer, P. (Ed.). (1992). *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hales, S. D. (1996). Nietzsche on Logic. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* , 819-835.
- Hegel, G. W. (1977). *The Phenomenology of Spirit*. (A. Miller, Trans.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Heide, D. (n.d.). The Neglected Neglected Alternative. *Unpublished* .
- Henrich, D. (1989). Kant's Notion of a Deduction and the Methodological Background of the First Critique. In E. Förster (Ed.), *Kant's Transcendental Deductions* (pp. 29-46). Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Hill, K. (2003). *Nietzsche's Critiques: The Kantian Foundations of his Thought*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Hogan, D. (2009). Three Kinds of Rationalism and the Non-Spatiality of Things in Themselves . *Journal of the History of Philosophy* , 355-382.
- Houlgate, S. (2013). *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Houlgate, S. (1993). Kant, Nietzsche and the 'Thing in Itself'. *Nietzsche-Studien* 22 , 115-157.
- Hume, D. (1978). *A Treatise of Human Nature*. (L. A. Selby-Bigge, Ed.) Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Hume, D. (2000). *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Husserl, E. (1973). *Experience and Judgment*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Janaway, C. (1991). Nietzsche, the self, and Schopenhauer. In K. Ansell-Pearson (Ed.), *Nietzsche and Modern German Thought* (pp. 119-142). London: Routledge.
- Janaway, C. (1989). *Self and World in Schopenhauer's Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Kant, I. (1998). *Critique of Pure Reason*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kant, I. (1992). *Lectures on Logic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kant, I. (1997). *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leiter, B. (2002). *Nietzsche on Morality*. London: Routledge.
- Longuenesse, B. (1998). *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Nietzsche, F. (1990). *Beyond Good and Evil*. London: Penguin Books.
- Nietzsche, F. (1996). *Human, All Too Human*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nietzsche, F. (1994). *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nietzsche, F. (1979). On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense. In D. Breazeale, *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's* (pp. 79-97). Amherst: Humanity Books.
- Nietzsche, F. (1999). *The Birth of Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Nietzsche, F. (1974). *The Gay Science*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Nietzsche, F. (1967). *The Will to Power*. (W. Kaufmann, Ed.) New York: Vintage Books.
- Nietzsche, F. (1995). *Unpublished Writings from the period of Unfashionable Observations*. (G. Colli, & M. Montinari, Trans.) Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Oxford Dictionary of English*. (2005). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Poellner, P. (1995). *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Poellner, P. (2003). Non-Conceptual Content, Experience and the Self. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* , 10, 32-57.
- Poellner, P. (2001). Perspectival Truth. In J. Richardson, & B. Leiter (Eds.), *Nietzsche* (pp. 85-117). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Quine, W. V. (1971). Two Dogmas of Empiricism . In W. V. Quine, *From a Logical Point of View* (pp. 20-46). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rayman, J. (2007). Nietzsche, Truth and Reference. *Nietzsche-Studien* , 155-168.
- Richardson, J. (1996). *Nietzsche's System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Schacht, R. (1983). *Nietzsche*. London: Routledge.
- Schopenhauer, A. (1974). *On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*. La Salle, Illinois: Open Court.

- Schopenhauer, A. (1958). *The World as Will and Representation Volume 2*. (E. Payne, Trans.) New York: Dover Publications, Inc.
- Schopenhauer, A. (2010). *The World as Will and Representation: Volume 1*. (J. Norman, A. Welchman, & C. Janaway, Eds.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schopenhauer, A. (1989). *Two Essays*. (J. Frauenstädt, Ed.) London: Chiswick Press.
- Shabel, L. (2010). The Transcendental Aesthetic. In P. Guyer (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (pp. 93-117). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Smit, H. (2000). Kant on Marks and the Immediacy of Intuition. *The Philosophical Review* , 109 (2), 235-266.
- Stack, G. (1983). *Lange and Nietzsche*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Strawson, P. (1966). *The Bounds of Sense*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Warren, D. (1998). Kant and the Apriority of Space. *The Philosophical Review* , 107 (2), 179-224.
- Wilcox, J. T. (1986). Nietzsche Scholarship and "The Correspondence Theory of Truth": The Danto Case. *Nietzsche-Studien* 15 , 337-357.
- Wood, A. (2005). *Kant*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.